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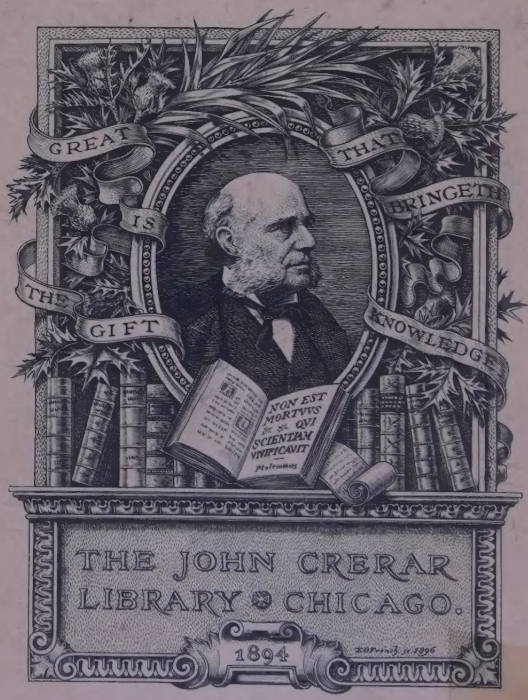
THE TRUTH AND ERROR OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

BY M. CARTA STURGE



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THE TRUTH AND ERROR OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

By M. CARTA STURGE
(MORAL SCIENCE TRIPOS, CAMBRIDGE)

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE REV. H. S. HOLLAND, M.A.
CANON OF ST PAUL'S

NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY
1903

9.D.

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Printed in Great Britain

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It is some ten years since my attention was first drawn to Christian Science by one of its accredited lecturers, and the interest I took in it led me to study it with considerable care, to read many of the books written upon the subject, and to become associated with some of its genuine followers. Consequently, the criticism attempted in the following pages is by no means a hasty expression of dissent, such as is often at first aroused by its somewhat startling tenets, nor the result of a superficial, ill-digested study carried on through a few weeks or months. But it is the outcome of a genuine and sympathetic effort to understand and appreciate it, made through the course of several years.

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Nor are the passages taken from Mrs Eddy's "Science and Health" (the work which has been mainly instrumental in spreading Christian Science) quotations taken at random after a hasty glance through the contents of the book. I am aware how easy it is to take isolated passages without reference to the context, and so to misrepresent the whole teaching of a book. I have endeavoured to avoid such superficial treatment, and, with that view, have not only read the book many times, but have pored over it in the manner necessary when one desires to be "steeped" in a subject, and thoroughly intimate with it, taking each point I have dealt with separately, and tracing it throughout the book, as well as endeavouring to see it in relation with all the other points taken as a whole. I have, however, met with extraordinary difficulty in trying to get a connected idea of the contents of "Science and Health," owing to one of its most striking characteristics, namely, its entire want of sequence, both in thought and in expression. It abounds in contradictions, not

only to be found in the same page, the same paragraph, the same sentence, but often between two words used consecutively. I have, therefore, been compelled to quote isolated passages. At first sight, this may give the impression that these quotations have been torn from their context; this, however, is not the case, for I have made a conscientious effort to become so thoroughly acquainted with the spirit of the teaching, as to feel as sure, as might be, of taking the quotations fairly, and not wrenching them from the meaning they are intended to convey.

The numbers in the margin, giving the page from which a passage is taken, refer to the eightieth edition of "Science and Health," but this has been carefully compared with one of the very latest, the two hundred and twentieth, in order to make sure that the teaching given in the later editions has not been radically altered.

I have made little allusion to the various, more or less mutually opposed, schools of

Healing by Thought, and have not even mentioned Mr Dowie, who has a following rivalling in numbers that of Mrs Eddy, and who is alleged to produce quite as striking cures without physical means. But he has attached his healing to no new theory of Metaphysic, or of Christian doctrine, and therefore does not propagate a belief in his cures which is subversive of ordinary doctrine or of common-sense. Consequently there is nothing new in his teaching to criticise, and as regards his healing, if there is any truth in the theory given as accounting for the cures of Christian Science, namely, the calling out, by some means, of a latent vitality residing in the sub-consciousness of the patient, it will equally account for those of Mr Dowie.

I gladly take this opportunity for tendering my warm thanks to the Bishop of Stepney, at whose suggestion I have written the book, for much helpful criticism, and to my friends Lady Low and Mrs George Boole for sympathetic aid, as well as to others, who

have kindly given me assistance on special points.

I also acknowledge with gratitude Canon Scott Holland's kindness in writing an introduction dealing with certain Theological points, which I have not discussed, having confined myself more particularly to the Philosophical aspect of the subject.

The treatment of Christian Science given in the book does not pretend to be an exhaustive one, but it is hoped that it may prove helpful to those who have not time to study the subject, and disentangle the truth from the error, for themselves.

M. CARTA STURGE.

8th November 1902.

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INTRODUCTION

I GLADLY leave to Miss Sturge the task of handling the unfortunate metaphysics to which Christian Science has attached itself. The relation of Mind and Matter was not likely to be solved at a stroke by one who is so ignorant, as Mrs Eddy seems to be, of all the intellectual efforts which, for two thousand years, Philosophy has spent upon this particular problem. Miss Sturge has shown, with a keenly sympathetic appreciation, how deadly is the practical bias of a perverted idea.

But if it is pitiful to see the philosophical experience of the past so completely ignored and wasted, it is even yet more melancholy to recognize how little the Christian Creed of the Creation and the Incarnation has succeeded in making its presence felt as a force to be reckoned with, as a known interpretation of the world, by those to whom this crude metaphysic appeals.

Surely, if ever the Christian position had been taken seriously by them, and considered as a view of life; if ever its language had been intelligible and habitual to them; if ever its outlook had been naturally familiar; if ever its assumptions had been apprehended, or its inspiration caught; if ever it had been alive, as an influence on their heart and brain, then this bald antithesis of Mind and Matter would have been instinctively and instantaneously repelled. Its hopeless inadequacy, its impotency in the face of facts, its niggardly and narrow impoverishment of thought, would have been obvious at a glance. It would have been impossible to fall a victim to such paralysing dilemmas. It would have been felt that these contradictions had received their happy solution long ago, in a rich and splendid Creed, which holds to the Unity and supremacy of Spirit with an intensity that knows no limit, and which, yet, has triumphantly realised and vindicated that Spiritual supremacy over all the vast and varied body of facts which we sum up under the term "material."

For the Incarnation is the announcement that Spirit is the ultimate reality of Matter. Matter is the expression, the organ, the body

of Spirit. It is a Spiritual Creation, a Spiritual Fact. That is its glory. Spirit possesses it; inhabits it; sustains it; fulfils it; transfigures it. In touching it, you touch Spirit. In seeing it, you see Spirit. In understanding it, you understand Spirit. In uniting with it, you are united to Spirit. In loving it, you love Spirit

This is certain, when once you have faced the great key-words which assert it, such as, "God is a Spirit"; "No man hath seen God at any time"; yet "he who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father"; "That which we have seen, that which we have heard, that which we have handled, of the Word of Life"; "He that eateth My flesh, hath eternal life"; "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." Such words as these, have passed far beyond the mere blind dilemma which imagines that the belief in the reality of Spirit involves the denial that Matter exists. So to believe is to fail to assert the reality of Spirit; for what we sum up as "material" is most certainly real, as a fact. It could be kicked by Dr Johnson. It can knock us down. To deny it is to be false to fact—and that is the unpardonable sin in Philosophy.

We have got, at all costs, to take in all the facts that we see before us; for Philosophy is nothing but the interpretation of facts. If it attempts to deny them, it pronounces its own doom.

Christianity looks out, on the entire sum of facts, in all the reality with which they enter into our vital experiences. It sees the solid earth in its undeniable activity. It sees humanity in its unmistakable flesh and blood. It sees a vast Physical Universe spreading away into illimitable regions of space and time, moving under inexorable laws, held together into a single ordered mass, by the stress of co-ordinated forces. All this it sees, it accepts. It denies nothing, it refuses nothing. Whatever a valid experience ratifies, this is, for it, real. Only, in every particle of the reality, it recognises the evidence of the Spirit which has made it what it is. Spirit is asserting itself through the outward fact. Spirit verifies its own validity through the very antithesis with which the material supplies it. Spirit works in its own freedom through the very instrumentality which it creates. It may limit itself by reducing itself to this or that external form, but it never loses itself. It

never suffers obscuration or deterioration, because it consents to work under limitation. It utilizes the limitation to intensify its own ideal purpose. It is not less Spiritual because it works through the material; for the material is not alien to it, not obstructive, not a perverse, foreign substance to be forcibly subdued; but it is Spirit's own: issuing from its own will; conceived for its own purpose; fused and identified with its own mind; congenial, effectual, correspondent, responsive, loyal. Matter is unintelligible except as the vehicle and organ of Spirit. Hence, however partial in its limited significance, it is, as far as it goes, perfectly adequate to that degree of spiritual meaning for which and by which it exists. Spiritual expression, spiritual manifestation, need suffer no damage or degradation—need lose no whit of reality, by transmission through material mediation. This is how and why it was possible for the Word to become flesh. This is how and why, in the flesh, we could see the glory as of the only Son of God, full charged with grace and truth. This is how and why the Word of God, Who is in the bosom of God, could make to us the absolute revelation through His Humanity:

so that he who hath seen Him hath seen the Father.

This is our normal Creed in the Incarnation: and it arrives at this its normal and natural consummation, because it runs back to the yet earlier Creed in Creation. It springs out of this primal and instinctive Faith in a God Who delights in the outward expression of His force and will; Who finds His glory in Creation; Who in the beginning created for His joy the material Heaven and Earth; and "behold, they were very good." They are shot through and through by His splendour. They sing of His Majesty and Power. They are the Garment of His Praise. They embody His Purpose. They are alive with spiritual forces. "He hath made them fast for ever and ever; He hath given them a law which shall not be broken." "Fire and hail, snow and vapour, rain and storm, fulfilling His Word." "For He spake the word and they were made; He commanded and they were created." "Praise the Lord upon Earth, ye dragons and all deeps. Young men and maidens, old men and children: praise ye the name of the Lord."

How is it conceivable (we repeat) for any

one who has once assimilated this superb Gospel of Creation, to be tangled ever again in that ancient and arid dilemma, which bids us choose between Spirit and Matter as between rival contradictions? How can such a choice be rationally proposed? The two are not alternatives. They cannot be brought together on the same platform. They express different levels of existence. The sole problem that they suggest is the problem of their correlation and co-ordination. They are antithetical, no doubt; but life always expresses itself through antitheses. What would it mean to be told that you could not love your friend if you loved his voice or his face—that you must choose between him himself and his bodily expression of himself? For you, such a proposal is childish and absurd. That which you love in the sound of his voice, in the sight of his face, is himself. This is what he shows himself to be. He may be more than that. Quite true. That is where the infinitude of Spirit reveals itself. But this infinitude itself is the secret that makes itself felt in the finite organization through which it is revealed. That is the very charm of voice and gesture and act—that they carry and convey something of what is beyond.

It comes to light in them, they are filled with it. And that is why we pray that it be granted us to move "from glory to glory in the face of Jesus Christ." The face of Jesus Christ holds in it the Infinitude of God.

But it may be well to go behind our Christian ease in front of the contradiction which others find so bewildering, and to ask for some explanation of this ease of ours. Why are we so free from intellectual trouble, in face of the material world? How is it that the outward, the concrete, the material, far from seeming to us a difficulty that obstructs spiritual reality, is, rather, the natural issue of Spirit, which we instinctively expect and welcome?

It is, I think, because we regard the reality of Spirit, not so much as "Mind" as "Intelligent Will."

Mind, Reason, Thought—these are abstract terms, and they are used in order to detach the intellectual Element in life from its invariable correlative, Energy. As so abstracted, its mode of operation lies in detaching Laws and Principles. It flings away the multiplicity of the particular, in order to extract the Unity of the formative Conception. It looks through the outward manifestations

to the inward law. Hence, for it, the concrete and the external are the husk to be cast off in order that the kernel may be exposed.

But for Will, it is entirely the reverse. Will realises itself in act. It needs and desires concrete realisation. It glories in the release of its energy through an external assertion of its purpose. It delights in the multiplied reiteration of such efficacious sacraments of itself. It finds its joy in the embodiment of itself in actuality.

And God is Intelligent Will; and for such a Will, it is natural that it should move out, under the impulse of a rational Love, to beget, to create, to mould as an artist, to transfigure as a poet or a prophet, to rule as a king, to cherish as a mother, to sacrifice as a priest. Self-sacrificing Activities on behalf of that which is beneath Him, and weaker and poorer than Himself, are His normal and native mode of expression. For us, therefore, to find that He, in His Infinite Spirituality, loves to pour out His gifts through the beggarly poverty of our flesh, and so to lift it into the light of His Transfiguration, is no surprise. It brings no intellectual shock, as to how Spirit can so ally itself with the Material. It is exactly what we

should expect of the God Whom we know to be the active energy of Love. For us, such an act, in its outward reality, manifests anew what we always believed God to be. The beggarliness of the material in which it is embodied, is precisely what supplies us with the measure of the Love. Therefore it is that Jesus, who had always loved His own, loved them to the very uttermost when He took upon Himself the form of a servant, and girded Himself with a towel, and knelt on the floor, and washed their feet in a basin, and dried them with the towel wherewith He was girded: or again, when He put His full Spiritual Efficacy into the material actions and symbols—into the blessing of the bread and the wine—and said, "Take, eat: this is my Body. Drink ye all of this: this is my blood." In all this bodily action, Jesus could say, "Father, glorify Thy Son," because the realisation of His Will in the external acts was but an echo, a repetition, far down on the level of material Nature, of that essential realisation of the Father's Will in the Begotten Son, by which the Son, over against the Father, is the Eternal Expression of His Love, the manifestation of His Glory.

The transfiguration of Matter, so as to become the medium of His Will, repeats, on a lower plane, the internal process which is the heart of the Divine Splendour.

We, then, look out at this natural Earth, and at our own bodily existence, as the very evidence of what we mean by the sole reality of Spirit. Every Artist and every Poet does the same. Every Prophet finds in the Natural the motions of the Super-natural. Every Priest feels about for the Thing which he shall bring and offer. "A body hast Thou prepared me."

And, here, it will be well to notice that the Super-natural for us is that which confirms and goes beyond the Natural. We start with assuming that Nature is a manifestation of God in His Spiritual Reality. The fixity of its laws is part of that manifestation. "He hath given them a law which shall not be broken." That is the sign of its Divine origin—that it shall not be broken. There is nothing but sin which breaks a law of God. But, granting this, we do believe that the same God who manifests Himself in Physical Nature does also carry His own manifestation a further step on;

and, moreover, corrects and heals the damage done to Physical Nature by our unnatural sin. He restores; He binds our wounds; He makes the crooked straight. And in both these directions, both of development and of restoration, we expect, therefore, and we find what we call the Super-natural, *i.e.* action taken by God over and above the previous action which we call natural. This Super-natural action, then, can always be tested in two ways: it must either (*a*) fulfil, and surpass by fulfilling, what is natural; or (*b*) it must be in the direction of restoring and healing that which has gone wrong in Nature. In either case, it will invariably tend, not to discredit the Natural, but to corroborate our confidence in it.

This seems to me the true standard of all that comes under the head of the "miraculous." True Miracles must increase our sense of the Truth of God in normal Nature. They must tally with it. They must open our eyes to it. They are not detached freaks of interference with its fixity: but the real interpretation and confirmation of its ministrant regularities. So our Lord, when He has healed, sends the

healed back to witness to the Priest, and to the normal life that men naturally live. And always He dreads the feverish attention which concentrates on the strange. He avoids the publicity attendant on His marvels: He flies from the crowd that follows: He abhors the longing for "signs." He does less and less of miraculous healing, as His work goes on. And for those who have found belief it ceases altogether. They are no longer relieved from perils and pains. As they come nearer to Him, they pass under the discipline of His own life, which prohibits Him from turning any stones into bread for His own relief, and from asking for any legions of angels to save Him from drinking the cup of terror. They must be exposed as He, to the taunt, "Let Him come down from the cross! He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

Faith as it advances, learns to fasten on the Lord Himself; it needs no wonder-works; these are but for a shift, that in some hour of failing trust, Faith may be able to drop to the second level, and to believe "for the mere works' sake."

The "works" are the pledges of that which

is proceeding in the Spirit. It is the same business that goes forward, whether on the physical level, where it means "Rise and walk," or on the spiritual level, where it means "Thy sins are forgiven thee." In either case the same faith acts in response to the same Master. But there is always danger lest there be the desire to rise and walk without the desire to have sin forgiven. It may, therefore, be safest for the man with the palsy to be left lying on his bed paralysed, with his sin forgiven, as, at first, our Lord appears to have proposed. It is only to silence the cavils of critical onlookers, that He adds the further word. Always He dreads lest faith should be arrested in the fascination of wonder, or fail to pass through the wonder to the higher level. "Ye seek Me . . . because ye ate of the loaves and were filled." Therefore He avoided localisation: He broke up with vehemence the accumulation of crowds round His works. Wonder is such a poor and untrustworthy motive. The healed themselves cease from all wonder. To them it appears perfectly natural to be carrying their beds, or to find their eyes open. They cannot understand why

people are so amazed. They have forgotten to ask even the name of the man who did it.

Thus it is that our Lord avoids, at all hazards, what may be called the exploitation of miracle. He presses on beyond. He withdraws men's eyes from too close attention to it. It is but the premonitory symptom of that new Kingdom, which has to win its way, without the help of legions of Angels, by slow, laborious processes, anxiously and wearisomely delayed. The wonder foretells, and reassures; but that is all. "Go and tell John, — Blessed is he who is not offended in me." The Kingdom itself will be brought into actual being only through the unavoidable offence of the Cross. So alone will the body yield to its gradual transfiguration, by which it will be raised to the transcendent condition in which that which is now supernatural, in momentary or rare acts of anticipation, will here become regular, normal, natural.

Nobody can ponder over this treatment by our Lord of His own transcendent power over the body, without recognising how special it is; how peculiar to Himself; how deliberate He was; how acutely conscious of the perils

touched. As we recognise this reserve, this self-restraint, this anxiety, we shall become more sensitive to the mystery of His Temptation. For we shall remember that His Temptation in the wilderness by the Adversary turns wholly round this very matter —how to master and direct to its true end the wonder-working of that Spirit which had just been poured out upon Him above measure.

In that dark hour it was exactly at this point that the pressure of moral peril was most severely felt. He was tempted to turn His power to arbitrary, or selfish, or headstrong usage. He was tempted to lose His balance. He was tempted to be reckless in His methods. He was tempted to trust to the abnormal, and to ignore and overstep the limits of our common humanity. As we read of that awful strain in the wilderness, that fell on Him Who, in spite of its fell onset, knew no sin, we can feel why so often, in our religious history, men who have been lifted, in strange exaltations, to levels of exceptional power, have toppled over, dizzy through pre-eminence. We learn how subtle are the moral issues involved, and how

terrible will be their revenge if they are trifled with.

The Incarnation, then, is the Gospel of the spiritual value of the material Earth and of the human Body. It proclaims the method of their transfiguration. In their glory it foresees its consummation.

But the end is not yet. The times and seasons are in God's hand.

We are forbidden to anticipate, by our impatient haste, the perfected correlation of spirit with body, which is the goal of our effort.

God has given us effective freedom in the things of the spirit; but He claims the body as peculiarly His own under His care. "Can we add a cubit to our stature?" Why do we trouble over what is His? It is ours to walk in the Spirit; and God will see to it in His own good-time that the result follows on the side of the flesh.

Sometimes He will allow us the boon of sudden intimations, which makes us aware, for an instant, what it would mean for the body and spirit to move together in one life.

> "We feel through all our earthly dress
> Bright shoots of everlastingness."

But these are rare. We cannot capture them or submit them to scientific regulation. They pass, and as they pass, they prophecy.

Strengthened by such prophecy we can plod on along the slow way of gradual approach, not knowing what we shall be, but confident that by His Mercy, when He shall appear, Who is the Glory of God, in our flesh, we shall be made "like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

H. S. HOLLAND.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

It is an intoxicating moment for any person when he first lights with a vivid realisation upon the doctrine that "things are not what they seem." For it opens up a vista of hopes and possibilities. What if the world about us, then, be only a seeming, evil a misapprehension, pain a mere dream mistaken for reality, sin non-existent, and death an illusion? What an end here to grief, disappointment, vexation, distress! There can be no wonder that a teaching like that of Christian Science announcing this should be received with eagerness far and wide, and soon count its converts in hundreds of thousands.

Such teaching, or something approaching it, is very far from new. Every religious movement has been in some form the revela-

tion or re-discovery that Spirit is the great Reality, and has announced it as a calm Living Presence lying deeper than the plane of sorrow and sin, and as that which can in great measure neutralise the importance and insistence of outward events by lifting us into the peace of a Spiritual Life lying beyond them.

But there are many and various ways of interpreting this discovery, which, though a truth more or less known, it would seem, ever since man could think, is always a re-discovery to each new soul that realises it, and seems as if it could never have been known before. And this, even when reached through normal channels; how much more, then, when attained in some unusual manner, as would seem to have been the case with the founder or founders of that form of teaching known as Christian Science.

The originality of Christian Science does not lie, therefore, in its putting forward a Spiritual truth unknown before, for whenever its exponents speak of Spirit or Mind, they use language with which we are all perfectly familiar, and to which most of us would respond with ready assent. The novelty of

the teaching lies rather in its way of accounting for the method of working of this Spiritual Truth, and in carrying it to such an extreme degree as has never been methodically taught before.

To this part of the subject it is, then, that we shall have to give special attention if we would have any real understanding of it, and be able to form a reliable judgment; and with a view to this we must try to give a concise epitome of its doctrine.

The book that we shall take as giving the authorised presentment of Christian Science is Mrs Eddy's "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," as the title runs. But in doing so, it is necessary for a moment to consider her claim to being the originator of the teaching.

It seems that something very like Christian Science was taught and practised for the purpose of healing, some years before Mrs Eddy published her book, by a Dr Quimby, a man of original mind and of exalted character. There is no doubt that his adoption of a system of healing on a principle of belief—different from what is known as Faith-healing—was considerably prior to Mrs Eddy's

use of a very similar method. Not only so, but it is well known, and can be proved by letters and publications of her own, that she learnt about healing of this sort from Dr Quimby himself, and was, at least partially, cured by him of a malady from which she had long been suffering. There has been recently a controversy upon the subject, the late Dr Quimby's friends maintaining that Mrs Eddy has unjustly claimed as her own discovery what she learnt from him. It is not necessary for our purpose to plunge into this controversy, since our object is to discuss the system itself, irrespective of the question who may have been the actual originator. But, as far as one is justified in expressing an opinion without going more thoroughly into it, there would seem no occasion to charge Mrs Eddy with intentional dishonesty, since any new discovery, scientific or otherwise, even if it be only a new aspect of an old truth, always springs up in more minds than one about the same time, a fact which gives rise to many an ardent dispute as to who should have the credit of having been the first in the field. And, undoubtedly, however Mrs Eddy first came by her ideas, her mind laid hold upon

them with that living force which necessarily imparts something of originality to any idea, whencesoever it may have been received. And at any rate it would seem that she considerably developed the theory; and it is the authoress of "Science and Health" who has made Christian Science so widely known, the book having passed through more than 200 editions, and being the cause, for good or for evil, of the great spread of this movement in religious thought. The language, too, in which she clothes her ideas is, on the admission of Dr Quimby's friends, entirely her own, mercifully for the literary reputation of Dr Quimby.

We must now give a short statement of the teaching itself as far as it can be made out from the inconsequent and loosely worded style of the book, and for this purpose we shall divide our subject into separate sections, each devoted to a special point in the system, for the sake of clearness.

To begin with, Christian Science lays claim to being a thoroughly scientific system. This is startling at once, as we have been accustomed to regard Science as dealing with secondary causes or physical facts, and as not

applying when we come to the study of those first assumptions as to Being, First Cause, Ultimate Reality (or whatever name we like to give), on which Physical Science builds its logical edifice, but which it is unable to prove by its ordinary methods. It is, however, just in this domain of unprovable assumptions, in this region that lies beyond the reach of Science, as ordinarily understood, that Mrs Eddy applies her "scientific" method, and makes her strongest assertions of what she considers scientific knowledge. Applying it thus, where the exactitude of ordinary Science never reaches, her system strikes us at first as the very reverse of scientific, even though it should really give us truth. Mrs Eddy recognises this, and defends her position. She speaks of the "true Science of God,"
5. "though," she continues, "departing from the realm of the physical, as it must, some may deny its right to the name of Science."
287. "Sneers," she says elsewhere, "at the application of the word Science to Christianity cannot prevent that from being Science which is based on Divine Principle, demonstrated according to a given rule, and subjected to proper tests." From this we find that she is

not quite so fantastic in her use of the term as at first sight appears, since by Science she clearly means knowledge based upon deductions from a given law, in fact "ordered knowledge," which is not infrequently given as a definition of Science, as we ordinarily understand it. If, therefore, we keep this well in mind, and read for "Science" "Principle," and for "scientific" "that statement which is a deduction from a definite law," the book will be a little more intelligible, and the words will seem a little less irritatingly misused. What we have to find out is, What is her basal Principle? Are all her statements logical deductions from it? and are we satisfied with "her proper tests"?

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE POSITION

SECTION 1.—*The Fundamental Principle. The Unity.*

THE fundamental principle of "Science and Health" is an assertion of Oneness, of the Unity which underlies the Universe. "God
7. is the Principle of Christian Science," writes the author. "As there is but one God, there can be but one Principle in this Science, and there must be fixed rules for the demonstration of this Divine Principle." "God is all."
6. "From the infinite One in Christian Science cometh one Principle and its idea; and with this one Principle come Spiritual rules and their demonstration." "God," she writes
225. again, "is supreme Being, the only Life, Substance, and Soul, and the only Intelligence of the Universe including man."

This truth is constantly asserted throughout the book, and here we shall all be in accord with it. We shall only be sorry that so splendid a theme as the underlying Unity is not more thoroughly, more adequately, we would say even, more richly treated, and that the writer has not supported her statement of it by reference to Philosophy and Physical Science. For both of these have, for the most part, always insisted on the Unity, and throw much interesting light upon the subject. To demonstrate how thoroughly we are at one with Mrs Eddy in this, her First Principle, and how entirely all thinkers are in agreement on the subject of the Unity, we will refer to one or two aspects of it, and for this purpose we will quote a sentence of Mrs Eddy's own. "Whence came to me," she asks in reference to this intuition that God is really our Life, 2.
"this heavenly conviction—a conviction in antagonism with the testimony of the physical sense? I know not." We may indeed heartily join her in asking this question, which is one of the great problems of the human mind. Whence comes the conviction which so powerfully governs all thought, that all things in the Universe are ultimately reducible to One?

It is indeed a conviction held "in antagonism to the senses," for experience has never given us a presentation of Oneness; we have never seen it, we have never been able to lay hold on Unity, and, judging by our ordinary impressions, there is very little to suggest it. The senses invariably interpret the world to us in terms of "maniness." The ordinary man apprehends it as a mass of differences, as consisting of many apparently disconnected things presenting little appearance of order or of relation with each other. The very fact that in taking note of a single individual thing we can apprehend it with five different senses at once, gives us an experience of plurality, of various qualities, as colour, taste, smell, hardness, and so on. If then we were to depend wholly upon our senses for presenting us with truth, Plurality, not Oneness, would seem to be the great fact of the Universe. And yet in all ages the thinking man has tended to refer all his manifold experiences to an underlying Unity, in which, though never presented in consciousness, he believes they inhere and have their being.

To go back no farther, aud to leave Oriental Thought alone, since the early Greek thinkers

tried to find the ultimate Unity in Water, Air, Fire, and later, in Number or Idea, what one might call the *Impulse to Unity* has driven man in his efforts to explain the Universe with a force which he is powerless to overcome. Why is it that, though the Unity is never actually found, man still goes on with the pursuit of it in undiscouraged conviction?

Mrs Eddy's first principle, the reduction of everything to Unity, is no less supported by the man of science than by the philosopher. When the former finds for species a common origin, when he gathers minor laws together and brings them under a higher one, and groups these higher laws under still higher, always in the hope of finding at last the Supreme and final Law which governs all things, the man of science is as earnestly seeking the invisible and all-embracing Unity as the most enthusiastic Idealist.

It is, in fact, the only way possible to thought, so to conceive of the basal Principle. The world can only present itself as intelligible to us, be rationalized, or brought into the realm of Reason, in proportion as we refer it all to One. Only so can relations be established which present the world as a con-

nected whole, as a consistent and ordered sequence of facts which can be understood and handled. Yet more, only thus can the Universe manifest a relation with the human mind, and be other than something totally foreign and alien to it, of which it can make nothing.

The author of "Science and Health" is, then, according to thinkers of every school, entirely justified in her assertion of Oneness as the root-fact of the Universe. But in this she presents us with nothing new, nor is there even any arrestingly fresh force of statement, nor any new facet of the truth brought out. And, when later we come to making a criticism of her treatment of it, we shall find serious misapprehensions, and also important omissions in connection with it.

SECTION 2.—*The Nature of the Unity.*

So far we are in agreement with Mrs Eddy's First Principle, and we have found it in harmony with the result of ages of thought, both speculative and scientific. We shall most of us also be little disposed to differ from her

when she states that the One in which everything inheres or has its reality is of the nature of Mind, Intelligence, Life, or Spirit, whether she uses these terms as opposed to matter, as commonly understood, or as opposed to blind force. To the believer in religion there can, of course, be no question about this, and we need not linger over it. But even knowledge sought on the most severely scientific principles —according to the usual understanding of "scientific"—is in the course of its researches landing us more and more in hypotheses which interpret the universe, in the ultimate conception of it, in terms so essentially non-material, that they nearly approach to what we understand by Spirit or Mind. The author of "Science and Health," then, in her First Principle is in harmony with most thinkers.

SECTION 3.—*The Christian Science Treatment of Matter.*

We have followed "Science and Health" so far with assent as to its First Principle, namely, that all things are referable to One, The Unity, God, spoken of indifferently as

Divine Principle, Spirit, Mind, Life, Substance, and to which the writer essentially attaches the Idea of Reality.

We now come to the author's one great deduction from it, namely, the nothingness of
7. Matter. "God, Spirit, being all," she writes, "nothing is Matter." "The realm of the real is Spiritual." "The opposite of Spirit is
173. matter, and the opposite of the real is the unreal, or material. Matter is an error of statement. . . . Nothing we can say or believe regarding Matter is true, except that Matter is unreal, and is therefore a belief." "Matter
19. will be finally proven to be nothing but a mortal illusion, wholly inadequate to affect man through its supposed organic action or
171. existence." "Matter has no life to lose."

Mrs Eddy will not allow that there is the slightest connection between Matter and Mind, and denies that Matter is a manifestation of Mind, or caused by or created by it. "Mat-
176. ter," she says, "is unknown in the Universe of Mind." "Spirit and Matter no more commingle than light and darkness. When one appears the other disappears." "Is Spirit,"
174. she asks, "the source or creator of Matter?" "Science," she answers, "reveals nothing in

Spirit out of which to create Matter." How different is this from the wonderful modern theories put forward by deeper thinkers! But more of this in its proper place. "Spirit destroys Matter," she continues. "Spirit is the only substance and consciousness recognised by Science. The senses oppose this; but there are no senses, for Matter has no sensation. To Spirit there is no matter. . . . It is a false assumption. Spirit and Matter cannot co-exist or co-operate; and one can no 175.
more create the other than Truth can create Error."

In these statements it is clear that Matter is absolutely severed from all connection with Mind. The two are in different worlds, hopelessly alien to each other, all existence and reality being denied to the one and asserted of the other.

The above quotations, whilst denying the reality of Matter, do not explain how we come by this illusion, or what the nature of this seeming reality is. To find out this we must seek further and try to discover some explanation or definition.

In one passage Matter is spoken of as "a subjective state of mortal mind, which this 2.

same mind calls *Matter*." In another it is
50. described as "the substratum of mortal mind."
And in yet another, where its total alienation
from Spirit is again emphasised, we find the
following description: "What is termed
66. Matter manifests nothing but a material
mentality. Not a glimpse or manifestation
of Spirit is obtainable through Matter. Spirit
is positive, Matter is its supposed opposite, the
absence of Spirit."

It is important to mark that in all these descriptions Matter is defined in terms of Mind, such as "mortal mind," "material *mentality*"—an especially curious combination of terms—and this, in spite of the repeated asseverations that Mind and Matter have absolutely nothing in common. The same inconsistency occurs again in a definition of the laws of Matter, which runs thus:—"The
64. so-called laws of Matter are nothing but
false beliefs in the presence of Intelligence
and Life where Mind is not." Matter is then a "belief," and what is a belief but an attitude of Mind?

But it is the terms "mortal mind" and "material mentality" which we must consider, if we would finally understand what the

Matter of Christian Science really is — for although it *is not*, it is always spoken of in terms of *is*. And this brings us to our next Section.

SECTION 4.—*The Christian Science Doctrine of the Human Mind, or "Mortal Mind."*

We arrive here, in "Mortal Mind," at what may be called the great invention or discovery of Christian Science. Here is its claim to originality, to the presentation of novelty. We shall see by and by how far we can attach value to it as a psychological discovery. Meantime we must try to find out exactly what is meant by it. This is no easy task, for the language which we have already found to be loose, and the logic which we have already seen to be inconsistent, are particularly at fault when Mortal Mind is in question. But we will do our utmost to arrive at a clear understanding.

To begin with, we have had Matter described in terms of Mortal Mind; now we have Mortal Mind defined in terms of Matter, or that particular form of it called Flesh, and so far we do not find that we have made any

advance. "The author," Mrs Eddy says, "calls
8. sick and sinful humanity *mortal mind*—meaning, by this term, the Flesh opposed to Spirit." She admits that the term is a "solecism in language," and involves an improper use of the word *mind*. "As Mind is immortal," she says, "the phrase *mortal mind* implies something untrue and therefore unreal, and as the phrase is used in Christian Science, it is meant to designate something which has no real existence."

It is unfortunate that as Mrs Eddy is very emphatic about the reality of Mind, and is equally emphatic in denying reality to Mortal Mind, that she calls this latter Mind. It is true that it is very difficult, as she says, to know what else to call this mysterious nothing, but above all things any word of a mental character in its meaning should have been avoided, if we are to fully apprehend the Nothingness of Mortal Mind.

However, we will let the name pass, and see if we can find out exactly what is meant by it, for we must understand this in order to understand the nature of Matter in Christian Science, since Matter is its "substratum" or "subjective phase." So

far we have only found Mortal Mind defined in terms of Matter, the very thing we wanted it to throw light upon. We must now see if we can find a definition which shall be more satisfactory.

Hope takes possession of us, for we have found a heading, given in capital letters, which runs thus :—

"SCIENTIFIC DEFINITION OF MORTAL MIND."

Here we shall surely find what we want. The definition has three degrees. We do not know what that means, for we have never seen a definition given in degrees before; still we extract it as we find it. The definition, too, has an added difficulty, for it is given wholly in nouns, which is unusual. However we are not going to be too particular, and we are full of hope. We give the thing as it stands :—

SCIENTIFIC DEFINITION OF MORTAL MIND. 9.

First Degree: Depravity.

Physical :—Passions and appetites, fear, depraved will, pride, envy, deceit, hatred, revenge, sin, disease, death.

These are all bracketted under "Unreality."

Second Degree: Evil Disappearing.

Moral:—Honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance.

Bracketted under "Transitional Qualities."

Mortal Mind, we remark in passing, is becoming a much pleasanter thing, though still nothing. We can have depraved nothing, and a rather agreeable nothing, it seems; but our puzzle is how that which is absolutely nothing can have any qualities at all, and differing qualities too, for where we have a difference, we ordinarily understand that there is *something* that is capable of differing.

We pass, however, to the

Third Degree: Spiritual Salvation.

Spiritual:—Faith, wisdom, power, purity, understanding, health, love.

Bracketted under "Reality."

And it is added immediately afterwards: "In this third degree Mortal Mind disappears."

This astonishes us particularly, for we have

just had the wonder grow under our eyes, as it were, of seeing unreality gradually, through transitional qualities, develop into reality. This emergence of reality from unreality was surprising enough, but we did at least think that if this wonder could occur, and Mortal Mind thus attain to reality, this would be the moment when it would not disappear. Its disappearance we should expect when it was *un*real; but it seems it is just as it has become *real* that it disappears and dissolves once more into illusion.

All this is bewildering, and gives us very little intelligible information.

We must try again, and see if we can learn a little more about Mortal Mind, for, we must remember, that we are here dealing with the great discovery of Christian Science, and we must have a clear understanding of it.

If there is one thing more than another, as has already been shown, on which Mrs Eddy lays stress, it is that Mind and Matter are entirely independent of each other, that "Mind cannot produce its opposite, Matter," 531.
and "Matter cannot produce Mind." Yet, on referring once more to this definition, it appears that the First Degree of Mortal

Mind, which is marked as *Physical*, evolves in the Third Degree into something marked "Spiritual." Here is Spirit actually evolving from the Physical. What can we make of it, when even Spirit is not allowed to be capable of producing Matter?

We are as yet no nearer to an understanding of Mortal Mind, and, therefore, still in a state of confusion about Matter, "the subjective state of Mortal Mind." Why *subjective?* we would ask in passing. For since these illusive creations of Mortal Mind present themselves as material objects, they might have been more fittingly described as its *objective* state. But we must not be too particular, although we have been taught that we cannot be too accurate in these matters.

We will now leave further consideration of this definition with its three degrees and its miracles of evolution and devolution. We have tried to understand it, but have failed. Even at the risk of being tedious, we must make yet one more effort to get to the bottom of this theory of Mortal Mind, for on this depends the whole position as to the *theory*, at least, of Christian Science healing. Moreover, for our own part, we find it a psycho-

logical problem of the highest interest, and we really want to learn all we can about it.

We start forth once more, then, in quest of a solution of the problem, and have the good fortune to find yet another description of Mortal Mind. For in one passage the author speaks of disease as "originating in unconscious Mortal Mind, or in the body, which 373.
is in fact Mortal Mind, though it is called *Matter*." This is again disappointing, for again Mortal Mind is defined in terms of Matter—or that phase of it called *Body* which is its own creation—and we have made no progress. Let us mark, too, that here the author speaks of "unconscious Mortal Mind." Is then this nothingness, that is not Mind but only Matter, capable of the mental attributes that have to do with consciousness? It seems that it is, for on turning to the Index we find it stated under the heading "Mortal Mind," that it "acts unconsciously as well as con- 627.
sciously," and what can we do, then, but regard it as after all something mental? But we are not yet at the end of the contradictions involved in Mortal Mind, for, having been assured in various passages that it has no existence, we find it stated in the Index that

when it "gives up its belief in death, it will advance more rapidly towards God, Life, and Love." After all, then, it *is* to exist, to attain to Life. It is, too, we are thankful to find, to "advance towards God," in spite of the statement further down in the Index that it "cannot cognise God," and of the fact that in the Glossary it is defined, not only as "Nothing
571. claiming to be something," but as "the opposite of Spirit, and therefore the opposite of Good or God."

In the same place it is defined as "Mythology." This does not help us much. It is in the same context defined five times as a "belief" in this, that and the other, therefore as possessing an essentially mental power, but soon afterwards it is defined as "material senses," which elsewhere are allowed to be nothing but Matter.

So far the confusion is "worse confounded." We will try yet once more, for now we come to a passage in which Matter and Mortal Mind, instead of being defined in terms of each other, are defined together in terms of a third thing. Hope springs up, we are going to understand at last. Here is the definition. "Matter and mortal mind are

different strata of human belief. The grosser substratum is named *matter*. The more ethereal is called human or mortal mind, and is the nearer counterfeit of Mind." This short sentence abounds, as usual, in contradictions, when taken in connection with other statements in the book upon the subject. Above we found mortal mind five times in one passage identified with *belief*, but here it states that mortal mind is not identical with belief, but is one stratum of it only. Some way back we found that matter was "a subjective state" of mortal mind, the one being a state of the other, but now they are two different strata of a third thing, human belief; and this we have found to be an alternative term for one of its two strata! But we will let that pass, and accept the present statement that matter and mortal mind are two different strata of a third thing—human belief. Human belief, then, is the link uniting the two; but presently the link is given a very different name, and one which brings us perilously near to that which Mrs Eddy especially despises—Physical Science; and this, it seems, is Electricity. We are getting more and more involved in discussions which need profound

learning, but this does not trouble the exponent of these doctrines, and we must see what we can learn from them.

"Electricity," we are told, "is not a vital
189. fluid, but the least material form of human consciousness, the material thought essence, which forms the link between matter and mortal mind." "The electricity," the author continues, "of mortal mind, its gases and forces, counterfeit the Spiritual forces of eternal Mind. . . . Electricity is the essence of mortal mind." Just now we found it was the link *between* matter and mortal mind; now it is *mortal mind itself*, its essence. The introduction of electricity lands us in more difficulties than ever, and finding it defined as "the least material form of human consciousness" would leave us with an uncomfortable idea that the force generated by the operations of the electrician and his machines in the laboratory is human consciousness, if
74. we did not find in another passage that by electricity the author means that little known force, which, for want of a better name, is called animal or personal Magnetism. Although the allusion to so little known a force does not enlighten us much, it enables us to

have a somewhat more intelligent notion of what Mrs Eddy means.

We must now see if we can arrive at some conclusion about Mortal Mind. We have traced it throughout the book, and given various definitions or explanations of it contained therein; these we have invariably found to consist of contradictions. The search for some real and consistent knowledge of Mortal Mind is, as it has been well put, "like taking a long walk to catch a mist." We have avoided taking the reader the long walk it has cost ourselves, and have led him by short cuts; but, whether we go by short cuts or by the long and tedious, very devious road, we arrive at no intelligible conception of Mortal Mind.

We do from time to time come upon clear statements, but only to find them immediately contradicted. It is stated, for instance, "that 398.
Mortal Mind is not an entity," that it is
"nothing claiming to be something," but how 571.
can that which is nothing, a blank, an empty void, have the power of asserting a claim? *Nothing* is indeed endowed with powerful attributes, even including that of creation, as is set forth in the Index, where four columns are

devoted to a description of the powers and attributes of this non-entity, Mortal Mind, of which we give a small selection: "Mortal
627. Mind *accepts* the erroneous conceptions of life . . . *acts* unconsciously as well as consciously, Adam-like *looking* for happiness and life in body, *advances* more rapidly by *giving up its belief* in death—*argues* against itself, *begins* with evolution, *believes* darkness as real as light, *believes* sensations form blood, flesh, bones, *builds* its own body, *calls* earth liquid solid, etc., can *decree* that we shall be young, *can influence* others . . . *causes* diseases, *changes* order into discord, *cherishes* evil and malice, *confers* power on drugs, *counterfeits* divine justice, *creates* its God, *creates* its own conditions, *creates* its own demands, *develops* the body, *dooms* it to decay, *forms* all conditions of body, *thinks* God is powerless, *transfers* its fears to other minds, *transforms* the spiritual into the material, *wills*" various things, and so on. We have put all these verbs in italics to call attention to their variety. By this time we must be much impressed with the very powerful reality of Mortal Mind, and feel that, so far from being nothing, it is a something that almost amounts to omni-

potence. It is in fact the creator of our whole material world, which is nothing more than a false belief growing out of the activity of Mortal Mind.

The doctrine of its non-existence breaks down on Mrs Eddy's own treatment of it. Yet the following passage gives the lie direct in plain terms once more, and we read, "according to Christian Science, there is no Mortal Mind out of which to make mortal 398.
beliefs, springing from illusion," and the long and interesting list of its powers goes for nothing!

In the end we are driven to the conclusion that the Psychology of Christian Science in regard to Mortal Mind is unintelligible nonsense.

SECTION 5.—*The Christian Science Treatment of the Body.*

Following as a logical sequence on the denial of Matter is the denial of the existence of our Body, and, indeed, the whole theory of the nothingness of Matter is developed with the express purpose of denying the existence of the Body, as a means of explaining the philosophy of Mental Healing.

In examining the treatment of the body in "Science and Health," we are baffled by the same difficulty that we encountered when studying Mortal Mind, namely incessant contradictions. To this is added another logical fallacy. For here Mrs Eddy continually makes statements which involve two opposed meanings, with one of which we wholly agree, but with the other of which we are in entire disagreement. This difficulty is due to the fact that the author uses many words, such as Life, in two senses, and argues from either sense as suits her purpose. For instance, in the following passage she says: "It
205. is a self-evident error that there can be such a reality as organic animal or vegetable life, when it always ends in death, for Life is never for a moment extinct, is never structural or organic, and is never absorbed or limited by its own formations." Here she even marks the two different senses in which she is using the word "life," by using a capital in one case and not in the other; yet the whole argument is given as if she were taking only the one sense, namely that which involves the use of a capital L. When she says that Life is never extinct, structural or organic, she is

using "Life" in its absolute sense, where it means the supreme essence of things, the One in which all lives, and moves, and has its Being, God. We agree with her here; Life in this sense, she truly says, can never become extinct, and, *as* the Absolute, cannot be organic or structural. But when she states that animals or vegetables have no reality or life, because they die, and Life cannot die, she is opposing Death to the Supreme Life, and not to that temporary manifestation of it which, when it leaves the organism, causes what we call death. Almost invariably when Mrs Eddy speaks of Life, she falls into this fallacy, and then asks us to believe that, because life cannot die, there can be no bodies or organisms—human, animal, or vegetable—because these organisms die.

In addition to such fallacies as these is another. This is that frequently the major premise is unexceptionable, and readily to be granted, but the deduction from it is false. For instance, when Mrs Eddy asserts that there is "no intelligence in nerves," and that "brain-lobes cannot think," the statement is true, but she is not logically justified in drawing the conclusion, as she does, that

therefore nerves have nothing to do with pain and pleasure, or brain-lobes with thinking. For in doing so she takes for granted that the only possible connection between nerves and sensations, brains and thinking, is that of causation—nerves being the cause of sensation, brains of thinking—whereas there is another alternative, that they can be *means* by which sensations are felt, or by which Mind manifests itself in this phase. Again, she is perfectly right when she says that "Matter cannot of itself see, feel, hear,
463. taste or smell. It is not self-cognisant—cannot feel itself, see itself, or understand itself." Certainly it can do none of these things when Mind is absent. But again the deduction is unwarrantable that therefore the organs of the body have nothing whatever to do with seeing and hearing, etc., for the simple reason that all the possibilities have not been exhausted before drawing this conclusion.

These false conclusions from true premises are particularly mischievous. For readers untrained in logic, seeing the truth of the major premise, take it for granted that the rest is equally true, and at once unthinkingly

swallow the whole, whatever the violence it may do to their own sense of truth and reason.

However inconsequent the reasoning, Mrs Eddy finally denies the existence of any outward and visible envelope to Man, stating that "a material body is a mortal belief," and, still 461.
more strongly, that "Mortal body and material man are delusions which spiritual 198.
understanding and science destroy." She even carries the belief in its non-existence so far as to deny the necessity of food for its nourishment. And she speaks of a woman as having, under the influence of Christian Science, "learned that food neither strengthens nor 118.
weakens the body, though mortal mind (the omnipotent nonentity again) has its material methods of doing this work, one of which is to declare that proper food supplies nutriment and strength to the human system." And in another connection she writes: "The fact is, food does not affect the existence of man, and 386.
this becomes self-evident when we learn that God is our only Life." Here we have another instance of the logical fallacy spoken of above, the using of a word in two senses. For obviously when we talk of food as necessary for maintaining existence, a phase of life is in

question which is different from life in its purely spiritual form, in which sense the word is used in the latter part of the above quotation. All Christians believe that "God is our only Life," but this only makes it the more likely that in creating us to manifest life in the phase we call physical, He would also supply us with a corresponding means for sustaining it.

It is comforting to be told later on that it
387. would be "foolish to venture beyond our present understanding, foolish to stop eating until we gain more goodness, and a clearer comprehension of the Living God." We are, however, recommended to destroy the *belief* about food, lest the belief should some day tell us that we are "dying for want of food, for the penalty is thus coupled with the belief." "Admit," says Mrs Eddy, "the common hypothesis, that food is requisite to maintain life, and there follows the necessity for another admission in the opposite direction, namely, that food has power to destroy life, through its deficiency, or excess in quality or quantity." "This is a specimen," she continues, "of the ambiguous character of all material health theories. They are self-contradictory, and self-

destructive. If food preserves life, it cannot destroy it." We are afraid that this is a "specimen of the ambiguous character" of the logic of "Science and Health." As though everything we handle did not either minister to life, or tend to destroy it *according to the conditions*, as in the case of fire, water, or electricity, in their effect on human life.

The argument in "Science and Health" to show that it is impossible that man's soul should be infused through a body is characteristic. It is asked in the Recapitulation, which is a sort of catechism, "What evidence have you of Soul or immortality within mortality?" 462.
The answer is: "Even according to the teachings of natural science, man has never beheld Spirit or Soul leaving a body or entering it. What evidence is there in support of such a theory of indwelling spirit, except the evidence of mortal belief? Who can see a soul in the body?" Since, on her own showing, oft repeated, Spirit can never be seen by mortal eye, how is it likely that we could see a soul enter or leave a body? Yet this is gravely used as an argument that bodies do not exist. But the supreme contradiction of all contained in the book is the fact that it was ever written

at all, for strange to say, the aim and object of the whole work is to teach us how to keep the body in health, how to preserve this "mortal
198. body and material man," which are "delusions which Spiritual Understanding and Science destroy." Why not destroy it then? That is what the book should teach us, to be consistent with itself, instead of which its whole purpose is to teach us how to preserve it.

This alone is enough to show how impossible a position is involved in Mrs Eddy's "Metaphysic." She herself is forced to abandon it the instant it becomes a question of practice, and finally she accepts the body as a very real and insistent fact, and has done her best to render it an endurable one, for which we owe her thanks, whatever we may think of her methods.

SECTION 6.—*The Christian Science Treatment of the Human Intellect and of Natural Science.*

We have found the world of sensation disappear, and with it what we call the outer world of Matter, and the human body. We will now try to discover what we are to think of the

human intellect, and the science with which it deals. We build our hopes upon finding here something approaching to a firm footing. We are accustomed to regarding such knowledge as is conveyed merely through the senses with a rather doubtful eye, but, when corrected by the reason, we consider it a fairly reliable knowledge. We therefore hope to find here physical science and our more ordered knowledge held up for our respect. But in this we are soon disappointed. At an early page in the book we find it stated that "The definitions of law, material law, as given by natural science, represent a kingdom necessarily divided against itself; because these definitions portray law as physical, not spiritual, and are therefore in contradiction to divine decrees." "In all mortal forms of thought," continues Mrs Eddy, "dust is dignified as the natural status of man and things, and modes of material motion are honoured with the name of *laws;* and this continues until the leaven of Spirit changes the whole of mortal thought." In the next passage we quote we learn exactly what physical science is and how it comes about. We shall not be surprised to find once more

12.

a reference to Mortal Mind, and that it is again responsible for an illusion to which we have attached the value of reality. "Physical
17. Science," we are told, "is human knowledge—a law of mortal mind, a blind belief, a Samson shorn of his strength. When this human belief lacks organisation to support it, the foundations are gone." "Having," the passage continues, "neither moral might, spiritual basis, nor holy principle of its own, this belief mistakes effects for cause, seeks to find life and intelligence in matter, so limiting life, and holding fast to discord and death. In a word, human belief is a blind conclusion from material reasoning. This is a mortal, finite sense of things, which immortal spirit silences for ever and for ever." We had hoped that the marvels of Science discovered by the human intellect, and its demonstration of great laws working in a divine harmony, might be taken as some little approach to a glimpse of the wonders of the Creator, and that, rather than leading to "discord and death," it tended towards harmony and life. But it seems we were mistaken, for "Human
19. thought never projected the least portion of true Science," and "there is no physical

Science." We are further told that "*Natural* 21.
Science, as it is commonly called, is not really
natural or scientific, because it is deduced 170.
from the evidence of the physical senses," and
"what is termed material sense can only 194.
report lies about Being."

From this it is clear that our intellectual knowledge evaporates into nothingness like all else connected with the human being, and that it is yet one more misleading illusion to be destroyed with all haste.

SECTION 7.—*The Christian Science View of Man's Spirit.*

We have seen man's body, his brain and nerves, and, still worse, his intellect with all its reasoning powers disappear, and we now naturally ask, hoping at last to find something that is real and definite, and not a mere chimera, what does Christian Science teach concerning the Soul or Spirit?

We quickly lose our hope of finding anything left in man that is substantial and real. For, on turning to the Glossary, and looking under the head "Spirits" we find them defined
once more as mere "mortal beliefs," which we 574.

know equals illusion. Further on they are described as "corporeality," which removes them from the world of Spirit or Reality altogether. And yet further, spirits are defined as "mortal men and women: supposed intelligences . . . error, hallucinations," in which definition we "mortal men and women" disappear *in toto*.

We must try to discover more as to the nature of Man. In many passages he is spoken of as being made in the image of God, with which all Christians will agree. Mrs Eddy often, too, speaks of him as "the reflection of God," with which we might agree if we knew exactly what is meant by this. Our main difficulty is when we come to the question of Individuality, for, although Mrs Eddy believes in a Spiritual Universe, it is by no means clear that she believes in a Universe of Spirits. The following passages seem to imply that she does not: "Man is the reflec-
140. tion of Soul. . . . We run into error when we divide Soul into Souls, multiply Mind into minds." "Spirit is infinite. There
230. is but one Spirit, because there can be but one infinite, and therefore but one God. There are neither spirits many nor Gods

many. . . . God is Soul. Therefore there can be but one Soul."

Christians will entirely agree that there can be "but one Spirit," and "but one Soul," if the author is speaking of Spirit and Soul in the sense of the Absolute. But this does not preclude us from believing that the Supreme Soul may create spiritual entities, which, although never absolutely severed from Being —or they would cease to be—have nevertheless an individual existence, as a differentiated part of the whole, if we may so express it. "That they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and Thou in Me"—this Christians have never taken to imply a fusion into One, so that plurality and individuality should be lost, any more than, because the branches must abide in the vine in order to have life, we cease to regard the branches as differing from the root from which they derive their vitality.

Man is defined in one place as "God's infinite idea, or reflection," and further on we 196.
find, "Man reflects and expresses the divine substance, or Mind; but God is not in His reflection, any more than man is in the mirror which reflects his image, or the sun is in the

ray of light which goes out from it." This, too, unless we partake more in the life and being of God than the reflection in the mirror partakes of our life, seems to imply the non-existence of Man as an individual.

To be likened to a ray of sun is happier, since that is something more of an entity than the reflection in a mirror, but when we learn that "the sun is not in his ray," we again seem to disappear.

Finally, however, in contradiction with all the above, we are told of the "multitudinous forms of Mind which people the realms of the
199. real," and that Spirit exists in "multifarious
461. forms." And at last we find a sufficiently definite passage which would seem to allow real existence for the spirits of Man, in spite of all that has gone before, for it runs: "Man's individual Being can no more die, or disappear in unconsciousness, than can soul, for both are immortal." Something of ourselves, it seems then, is saved from disappearing into nothingness.

SECTION 8.—*The Christian Science Treatment of Sin.*

As to the cause of Sin, the doctrine here is at variance with the usual Christian doctrine, but the code of Ethics is substantially the same as that accepted by ordinary Christians. Mrs Eddy is indeed behind none in the excellence of the standard of conduct that she upholds. Nor, when we rise higher than mere morals into the sphere of Spiritual development, do we find her standard one whit behind that of the highest spiritual teaching, except in so far as her teaching upon the subject is vague. No one could urge more strongly that we should live in a spirit of truth and love, and according to the highest dictates of the Gospel. But here there is nothing different from what has been better taught before. For there is a vagueness in the expression of these truths, though it lacks nothing in vigour, which would leave us, if indeed the presentation of such truths *were* new, rather in doubt as to what was really meant by a spiritual life, and uncertain as to how to attain it. We are indeed taught that we must altogether dis-

believe in the reality of anything but spirit, and that having learnt to do that, evil will disappear; and that by denying the existence of the senses, we shall cease to be enchained by them; but for most of us to be told to disbelieve in the material world and its temptations, would not give us the *power* to do so. The absence of the Christian teaching, that in Christ we can lay hold on a Living Spiritual Force which can deliver us from the bondage of Sin and prove a dynamic by which we can overcome, seems to us from the Christian point of view the great thing lacking in the ethical teaching of Christian Science.

As to the nature of sin, we are told that it
457. is an "effect of error."

"Error," it is stated in the Catechism, "is
456. a supposition that pleasure and pain — that intelligence, substance, life—are existent in matter. Error is neither Mind nor one of its faculties. Error is its opposite, a belief without understanding. Error is unreal because untrue—that which seemeth to be and is not." Error is in fact another name for the false beliefs of mortal mind, and although just stated to be unreal, there is in the Index a long list of its positive and active powers,

similar to those we found attributed to mortal mind.

It seems that the radical error, which leads to all others, and especially to sin, sickness, and death, is the belief that "intelligence, substance, and life are existent in matter," in nerves and brains, and so on. There is a certain truth in this, in reference to sin at least, for in so far as much of our sin is due to a false apprehension of the relative value of things temporal and things eternal, to our seeking for life and our highest good in the material world and the things of sense, it may truly be said that we fall into sin by attributing "substance and life" to matter, instead of penetrating beyond it to that which is the source of matter. Thus in a sense we may agree with Mrs Eddy that sin is due to an illusion, a false belief. But it is difficult to discover whether this is all that she means when she states that sin is an illusion. For it is not at all clear from "Science and Health," whether she regards sinful *acts* themselves as an illusion, or whether they are merely *caused* by illusion, and are themselves only too real. The book throws little light on this, but the general opinion about Christian Science is that

it teaches that sinful acts are themselves an illusion. The point is important. For in the face of actual sinful deeds, it shocks the sensitive soul very conscious of its sin, to be lightly told that his sinful acts are mere illusion. It is quite another matter to be told that he has fallen into them through belief in the illusion of the senses. It is important again because, to hold that sin as carried into acts is illusion, is to render the work of Christ in its deepest meaning unnecessary. And this is believed by many to be the essential error in Christian Science teaching. It is not, however, at all clear from "Science and Health" that Mrs Eddy holds that the sinful acts themselves are an illusion, and, in the face of the uncertainty, we would gladly give her the benefit of the doubt. For then Christian Science would be denuded of one of its most dangerous teachings. It is, however, important that a warning as to possible danger here should be pointed out.

Whatever Mrs Eddy's real teaching upon this point, she does not regard sin lightly. She hates it, and is most earnest in her endeavour to induce sinners to leave sin, and come into the light of God and good. She does not speak lightly of sin in the

following passage: "If proper ward were kept over that lazar-house, that dismal cell and slaughter-house of infamy, mortal mind, the brood of evils which invest it could be cleared out. We must begin with this so-called mind, and empty it of sin and sickness, or sin and sickness will never cease."

SECTION 9.—*Christian Science Teaching upon Sickness.*

We do not propose in this section to discuss the method of Christian Science healing, for that we leave for another chapter. We have only to do here with the *nature* of sickness, as taught in "Science and Health." This is substantially the same as that of sin, and is merely the false belief of mortal mind. We have only to disbelieve in it, and it will disappear.

In Christian Science these two different kinds of evil, sin and sickness, are classed together as errors for which we are equally responsible, and sickness becomes a kind of sin. This classing of disease of the body in the same category with moral evil—we have been told by some who have witnessed the

result of it—has a very unhappy effect upon some of the votaries of Christian Science. For sickness often re-asserts itself, it seems, after temporary cure, and, fresh treatment by mental therapeutics failing, the return to ill-health is regarded as equivalent to moral failure. The patient suffers in mind accordingly, supposing herself to be culpable for admitting that she is ill, whilst powerless to throw off the illness. On a return to ordinary medical aid, which such patients are frequently driven to, they often find themselves repudiated by their Christian Science friends, as if they had relapsed into a sin. We know for a fact that this sort of thing occurs sometimes, and causes very real suffering. It is altogether to be regretted that sin and sickness are classed so much together, because, as regards moral responsibility, they are not really to be placed in the same class. So to place them, therefore, must tend to confusion as to the sense of responsibility; and this is always dangerous and hurtful to the conscience.

Along with the denial of the reality of disease, the reality of all other bodily uncomfortable states is denied, even to fatigue,

and this, although fatigue within proper limits is not disease or a thing to be classed as morbid, but merely part of the action and re-action, the alternation of activity and rest, the rhythmic pulsation, which is believed to constitute the very essence of the Universe. But of all this the author knows nothing, and, regarding the body as unreal, she believes it to be mere illusion that we are ever tired. Take the following passage: "You say 'Toil fatigues me.' But what is this *me?* Is it 133.
muscle or mind? which is tired, and so speaks? without mind could the muscles be tired? Do the muscles talk or do you talk for them? Matter is non-intelligent. Mortal mind does the talking, and that which affirms weariness first made weariness. You would not say that a wheel is fatigued: and yet the body is just as material as the wheel. If it were not for what the human mind says of the body, the body would never be weary any more than the inanimate wheel. An understanding of this great fact rests you more than hours of repose." We wonder that the Christian Scientist is allowed to sleep at night; it must be wholly unnecessary. The above passage is of course a consistent deduc-

tion if neither mortal mind nor body exist, and if there is no nerve-tissue in need of renovation.

Whilst on the subject of muscles, Christian Science teaches another interesting fact following on the doctrine that body has no reality, namely that the blacksmith's arm is not made strong through exercise. Let us read what Mrs Eddy says about it. "Because the
94. muscles of the blacksmith's arm are strongly developed, it does not follow that exercise has produced this result, or that a less-used arm must be weak. If matter were the cause of action, and muscles, without the co-operation of mortal mind, could lift the hammer and strike the nail, it might be thought true that hammering would enlarge the muscles. . . . Not because of muscular exercise, but by reason of the blacksmith's faith in muscle, his arm becomes stronger." It is perhaps a little discouraging to know that no amount of practice can perfect our bodily action, and, although belief would seem to answer the purpose of practice quite as well, for our own part, we feel that to make a sufficiently strong belief to effect the result would be a far more fatiguing process than trying to handle the blacksmith's hammer.

It is cheering to learn that if we become a Christian Scientist, physical conditions become entirely a matter of indifference, and all considerations of cause and effect, such as that colds are produced by draughts, can be once for all thrown aside. "What is now considered," says "Science and Health," "the best 18.
condition for organic and functional health in the human body will no longer be found indispensable thereto. On the contrary, opposite conditions will be found equally harmonious and health-giving. Neither organic inaction nor over-action will be dangerous, for both these conditions will be as normal and natural to changed mortal thought, and therefore as harmonious in their physical manifestations as the prior states which human belief had created and sanctioned. Thus matter will be finally proven to be nothing but a mortal illusion, wholly inadequate to affect man through its supposed organic action or existence, and mortal mind will be without form and void." Well, naturally, since the body does not exist, no conditions relating to its welfare of any sort can be of the slightest consequence.

The actual origin of evil Christian Science

throws no light upon at all, for to attribute it to the false beliefs or creations of mortal mind is to leave us with the puzzle on our hands. How did it come about that man, created in the image of God, created for himself a world of evil, consisting of a variety of false beliefs, which take such different forms as those of sin and pain, and that he created this by means of an unreal something, not originally in his constitution? On Mrs Eddy's theory, it remains a mystery how this unreal something, this mortal mind, could assume so entirely the semblance of reality that at last it seemed to Man more real than that in him which originally was real, and came to be believed in as his mind, possessing an elaborate power of reasoning, and as a body having a great sensitiveness to pain. If the mortal mind must create an illusive body, why did it make an *unhealthy* one?

SECTION 10.—*Christian Science Teaching on Death.*

That man is gifted with Eternal life is a doctrine very strongly enforced in "Science

and Health." "It is a sin," says Mrs Eddy, "to 426.
believe that aught can overpower omnipotent
and eternal Life; and this Life must be brought
to light by the understanding that there is no
death." The question is, what does she mean
when she says "there is no death"? We
should naturally take her to mean that the
soul survives the death of the body. But in a
definition of death, it is described as "an illu-
sion; the unreal and untrue; the opposite of 563.
Good, God, or Life," and in the Index it is
spoken of as "obsolete." On this we begin to
feel a little startled, and eagerly turn to the
reference in the text to see what this may
mean, and there we find the following state-
ment: "Divest yourself of the thought that
there can ever be substance in matter and 255.
then . . . Being will be recognised as spiritual,
and death will be obsolete; though now we
insist that death is the necessary prelude to
immortality." And again Mrs Eddy, after
quoting from the Gospel of St John, "If a
man keep My saying, he shall never taste of
death," adds, "That statement is not confined 427.
to spiritual life, but includes all the phenomena
of existence."

It is plain that Mrs Eddy means nothing

less than that the body need not die if we only cease to believe in death.

"Belief," she goes on, "in sickness and death, as certainly as a belief in sin, shuts out a true sense of Life and Heaven from our experience. When will mortals wake to this great fact of Science?" "Mortal mind," she continues, "affirms that mind is
426. subordinate to the body, that the body is dying, that it must be buried, and decomposed into dust; but this is not so. Mortals waken from the dream of death with bodies unseen by those who think they bury the body." Yes, most true, we believe, but this by no means implies that nothing has been buried, and that nothing has died.

424. "Man is immortal, and the body cannot die, because it has no life to surrender," we read yet again. Here, at least, we find consistency, that rare virtue in the book, for undoubtedly it follows from the oft-repeated teaching that the body is not real, that it can have "no life to surrender." "Death," she continues, "is but another phase of the dream that existence can be structural. . . . The dream of death is to be mastered
242. by Mind." "Death must be overcome, not

submitted to, before mortality yields to immortality."

Undoubtedly physical death is denied, but it has not yet been claimed by Christian Scientists that they do not die. We only lay stress upon the point here, because it is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Christian Science view of the physical side of things, which it is instructive to contemplate. Except for this impossible teaching as to the death of the body, Mrs Eddy's treatment of the immortality of Spirit is excellent, and put with such force as to make one realise it with freshness. The vigour with which she brings this great Christian truth home to us is perhaps partly accountable for the popularity of "Science and Health." However foolish her teaching upon the physical side of death, she so leads the attention to the idea of Life, as to make that take its due place as *the* important thing with which man is concerned; whilst death takes the subordinate place that it should, and sinks into insignificance, to be thought of as a thing not to be frightened at, or in itself of importance. But it is to be wished that Life could have been thus emphasized without resort to quite so stupendous an absurdity as

that there is no such thing as the death of the body.

SECTION 11.—*The Christian Science Treatment of Reality.*

We have found throughout our study that Mrs Eddy lays much stress upon the Real and the Unreal, and, as in her system the entire welfare of Man depends upon his throwing aside as unreal what he ordinarily believes to be real, it is important to understand exactly what is meant by these terms. To this we will now devote our attention. As usual, it is difficult to elicit from the book any very clear statement.

What constitutes the Real has in all ages been a question for controversy of a highly metaphysical character. Mrs Eddy does not, however, consider the question one of sufficient difficulty to make it necessary even to explain what she means by the Real. She simply identifies Mind, Spirit, and all included under those terms, with Reality, whilst, conversely, all that is included under Matter is Unreal, so that Reality and its opposite are, as far as explained at all, defined in terms of

Mind and Matter, and bring us no farther than these terms have already carried us.

To find out, if possible, how Mrs Eddy uses the words, we will consider the various ways in which Reality can be understood, taking only those meanings which are relative to the subject, and leaving all others aside.

We find, then, the following possible meanings of Reality:—

(1) That which is permanent, as opposed to that which changes. In this sense the Real would apply to the underlying Unity, as opposed to its manifestations in variety.

(2) That which is Absolute Truth, as opposed to that which is relative, or true only for a given created mind, or class of minds, such as human knowledge as contrasted with the absolute knowledge of God.

In these two meanings Reality is applied to the Spiritual, rather than to the Physical world.

(3) That which is of Phenomena, or the Physical world, as opposed to the Ideal, and to the Spiritual.

This is the ordinary view of the plain

man in the street, who prefers what he calls the real facts of the outer world to the Ideals of Poetry, or of Spiritual things, which he tends to think are unreal, or mere fancies.

(4) That which is said to belong to the external world, as opposed to our dreams in sleep, and to what we call the merely imaginary, such as an optical illusion, or a fancy, or a castle in the air.

(5) That in our experience which has some element of fixity in it, which no amount of mental effort (apart from action by which we can alter our circumstances) can annihilate, and which others placing themselves in the same conditions will also experience. For instance, when sitting in a room, we find ourselves within a space bounded by walls, a ceiling, and a floor, limiting the room to a certain size and shape, which by no effort of thought on our part can we enlarge or alter, however much we may be convinced that such limitations in the outer world are a

mere illusion. These fixities, or limitations, too, are experienced not only by ourselves, but by every one else who comes into the room, and they are only alterable by actually knocking down the walls, or otherwise effecting changes by physical means.

We do not pretend here to a perfectly worked-out system of definitions, and some of these may more or less include each other, precise distinction being very difficult, but they will be found sufficient for our purpose.

Reality in these last three definitions applies to the Physical world, and not to the Spiritual, to the realm of the senses, of experience, while in the first two it applies to that which we apprehend only by the medium of Ideas or conceptions, such as Unity, Totality, the Absolute, none of which are given in experience.

In which of these meanings is the word Reality employed in "Science and Health"?

It is used in the first meaning when it states that God, Spirit, the Divine Mind, the One, or that which abides, alone is the Real, whilst its opposite, Matter, with its finitude and tendency to decay, is unreal.

It is employed in the second sense when it
170. is stated that "knowledge gained from matter, and through the material senses, is only an illusion," and that "all our merely human
171. theories are destitute of Science," by which is meant Divine or Absolute knowledge, which alone is allowed any Reality.

These two meanings do not exclude each other. The question is, do they exclude the other meanings? Applying Reality, as they do to the Spiritual and Permanent, does it follow of necessity that the physical and transitory can have no share in it? Mrs Eddy thinks that it does, and accordingly pronounces the world of Matter to be altogether unreal. She goes so far even as to allow no more reality to our waking experience than to our dreams, and teaches that the former is as much an illusion as the latter. "Now I ask,"
146. she says, "is there any more reality in the waking dream of mortal existence than in the sleeping dream?" She is even inclined to allow that in the sleep-dream we are nearer to true knowledge than when we are awake.
145. "The dream," she says, "has less matter as its accompaniment. It throws off some material fetters." This sentence of course we cannot

understand, for, since the material world is only a dream, it is hard to see how the sleeping dream can be *more* of a dream, so as to be less "materially fettered."

It is, however, plain that Mrs Eddy entirely denies reality in the sense given in the fourth definition.

She equally denies it in the fifth, in which Reality is spoken of as applying to an element of fixity in our experience so wholly outside the power of our will to alter, that, whatever our theory, we are obliged in practice to yield to fixed limitations, and accommodate ourselves to them as best we can. Such are the limits of Time and Space; such a fixity is our body, which, whether we will or no, we have to carry about with us, and to the needs of which we must attend. Such a fixity, too, in the united experience of mankind is death, a limitation of our earthly life so fixed in its character that we often say that it is the one thing we can calculate upon with unfailing certainty.

Mrs Eddy denies these limitations *in toto*. The fixed laws of "birth, growth, maturity, and decay," she states to be mere illusions, and she frequently denies the law of cause and effect, as when exercise is allowed to have no

influence upon the development of a muscle. So with everything else. These fixed limitations are, according to her, nothing but illusions which can be thought away by a sufficiently persistent change in our belief. The validity of this doctrine will be discussed later on.

SECTION 12.—*Christian Science Idealism.*

Mrs Eddy's "Metaphysic," so far as it can be given the dignity of such a name, consists, as we have seen, of a vague sort of Idealism. That is to say, it is Idealism in so far as Mind is asserted to be the only reality. But in so far as it denies any existence whatever to Matter, it is the crudest form of Idealism that can be presented, and can scarcely lay claim to being a Philosophy.

A Philosophy, to be worthy of the name, is an attempt to explain the Universe in such a complete manner as to leave, if possible, no fact of which we are cognisant unexplained. It has to posit a theory large enough to cover all that comes, through whatever channel, within our ken. We do not claim for any Philosophy that it has succeeded in carrying

out this unattainable ideal of human knowledge, but we do claim that any attempt to explain the entire Universe, which succeeds in this only by means of throwing out of account, as unreal, all that it cannot conveniently fit in with its theory, is certainly not a Philosophy. A Philosophy has to *account for all the facts*, not to throw them away. It is no help to announce that certain experiences are unreal, do not exist, merely because we cannot fit them into our hypothesis. Yet this is precisely what Christian Science does in order to establish its doctrine that there is no evil. And the facts, too, which it throws out in order to save its sinking ship, are large facts, and cover a very large proportion of human experience. The whole of Matter has to go, and with it all our outer world, our body with all its needs, and our intellects with all that they discover of the physical laws, which give order and sequence to its knowledge. It will be admitted that we secure our Idealism at a heavy price, and that at every turn it does violence to our reason as well as to our common sense.

Genuine Idealism does not do this, although in popular imagination this is what it is supposed to do. Idealism which lays claim to the

name of Philosophy, throws nothing away. It is true that it asserts that we cannot know independent Matter, on the ground that we know anything only under the condition of its being given as an experience of our mind; but the facts to which we give the name of Matter are not on that account thrown away, or asserted to be non-existent; they are accounted for on another assumption than that of independent Matter, a subject into which we shall go a little later on, when, some other criticisms having been made, we shall be in a better position for discussing it.

Meantime we merely wish to point out how very vague and unsatisfactory is the Idealism presented by Christian Science, and that it by no means explains the difficulties of the Universe. Nor does it enable us to arrive at any true Unity, when we only attain this by leaving out a great part of the experience which needs unifying, naming it Illusion, and so sweeping it contemptuously away.

SECTION 13.—*Summary of the Position.*

We must now summarise the Christian Science position as given in "Science and

Health," and in doing so try to understand the process of thought by which it is arrived at.

The primary object of the book is to teach us how to get rid of bodily disease by a mental process, without the aid of drugs or other physical means, Mrs Eddy alleging that she has produced such cures, and taught others to do the same. When first she healed by this means, she naturally wished to account for it. The thought she always impressed upon the patient's mind was that there is no such thing as sickness, and she took pains to make him disbelieve in the reality of his particular complaint. Cure, at any rate a temporary cure, often followed this suggestion, which led Mrs Eddy, and it seems Dr Quimby before her, to the conclusion that disease is in all cases a mere illusion created by believing in it. Only change the belief, and all will be well. Sickness then is resolved into a mere belief.

There is here no logical necessity for her doctrine that, not only is disease a delusion, but also our belief in having a body at all. Her position would have been far easier had she allowed the body reality, and pronounced

only its morbid states to be illusion. She would thus have avoided many a pitfall in her logic, and above all the superlative absurdity of telling us that we have no body, and then writing some 500 closely printed pages to teach us how to keep it in health.

Neither does it necessarily follow that Matter is also non-existent. This denial of reality to Matter seems to be the result of the extremely forcible manner in which Mrs Eddy lays hold on the principle that "all is Mind." She knows nothing of Physical Science, nor of Philosophy, and therefore can evolve no theory by which to bridge over the apparent opposition between Matter and Mind, but that of the simple and direct method of throwing Matter away, and leaving it altogether out of account.

No doubt it was after arriving at the non-reality of Matter that it was found necessary to let the body go too, as included under Matter, although it proves so much more than is needful for the explanation of her cures.

Matter, then, being non-existent, is an illusion, with all its attendant evils, originating in our belief; therefore a mental thing. But here she comes up against a difficulty, for her

first principle is not only that All is Mind, but that Mind is perfect and good. How, then, even in its human development, could Mind originate false beliefs such as the material world, and the body with the disease and pain which accompany it? Mind, too, being immortal, how could it possibly produce beliefs involving the idea of mortality? Only something mortal could do this, and Mind is not mortal. Hence the anomaly of Mortal Mind, which is not Mind because it is mortal and produces mortal beliefs, and yet which *is* Mind because there is nothing else but Mind, and beliefs also can only be a mode of Mind. Here we have the "Metaphysic" of "Science and Health" as far as it can be arrived at by inference, for the author gives no account of the process of thought, and nowhere enunciates her theory in logical sequence, but scatters her statements in the loosest and most disconnected fashion.

The subject is treated indeed with a confusion, a want of continuous thought, an absence of knowledge and logic, which alone would lead us to suspect the truth of doctrines which seem so incapable of being expressed in ordinary thought-sequence. It is true that

human thought is stated to be radically in error, and it may therefore, perhaps, be the one sole instance of consistency in the book that the old and tried methods of ordered thinking are entirely thrown aside.

In the following chapters we shall examine the validity of the "Metaphysic," and try to discover whether it is necessary for the explanation of Mental healing.

CHAPTER III

CRITICISM OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE POSITION

SECTION 1.—*Reality or Real Existence.*

As the so-called "Metaphysic" of Christian Science rests in the last resort upon Mrs Eddy's view of what is Real, and all her further opinions are deduced from that, it will be most convenient in criticising her doctrines to begin with this question of Reality, for this will place us in a better position for discussing the rest of the "Metaphysic."

We have found that the author denies reality to the phenomena of our experience, or what we call the material world, on the ground that the underlying Divine Principle or One, which abides under all change and variety, alone is real.

We find also that she denies reality to these same experiences on the ground that our

senses, and all reasoning from their data, give us only relative knowledge, which in her opinion is no knowledge at all. "What is
149. termed," she says, "material sense can only report lies about Being. . . . Ought we not then to judge this human knowledge . . . to be untrue and dangerous?"

For Mrs Eddy the Ideal in all its Divine perfection is alone true and real. We are with her here, except—an important exception—that we are unable to grant that it logically follows that, since the One, the Ideal, alone is Absolute Reality, therefore the Relative, the Many, contains no reality at all. We doubt, in fact, whether the Supreme Reality may not *include* reality in the lower sense, as described in the last two definitions which we gave of it, rather than exclude it and annihilate it.

We shall remember that Mrs Eddy denies reality to those fixities in our experience, which we are unable to alter at will, such as the limitations of cause and effect, and the laws which rule our body. Also that she allows no more reality to our waking experience than she does to our dreams in sleep, and considers the latter, if anything, the more true. We will take up the subject of dreams,

as opposed to waking experience first, and try to find out, if we can, what it is that makes ordinary mortals like ourselves attach a greater reality to our waking impressions than to those we have in sleep, and why we differ from Mrs Eddy when she affirms that experience, or mortal mind, as she calls it, is "no more real when awake than in a dream." It is no easy matter to draw the distinction, it is true—to draw it in definition, that is, for we all know the distinction well enough for practical purposes. Absurd and incongruous things happen in our dreams, and, as a rule, we are deceived into believing them true; how is it that on awakening we immediately disbelieve what a moment before we believed with unenquiring simplicity? What is the test that we apply, with such rapidity, too, that we are almost unconscious of doing it? It is that of past experience stored up in the memory, which is to a great extent in abeyance during sleep. On the recovery of its use we remember manifold experiences which give the lie to much that we have just been dreaming, and experiences, too, connected with each other in an ordered and consistent manner, obeying the sequences which we call those of cause and

effect, and taking their place in time and space with an order so invariable that we can make no mistake about it. We know, for instance, quite certainly, that if a man arrived in India last week, he cannot arrive in England this, no matter how much a dream may have brought him apparently into our presence here and now. This is in marked contrast with the vagaries of circumstance which occur in our dreams, when we are not in the least surprised if a person we think we are talking with suddenly turns into some one else, or metamorphoses take place as absurd as "Alice's" experience in "Wonderland" when a baby she was holding presently turned into a little pig.[1]

Whatever other marks of perhaps a vague and intangible character there may be by which we distinguish between waking and

[1] We are alluding here to that which we usually understand by the sleep-dream, with which we are all familiar, and not to the ordered intellectual dream which some assure us it is possible to attain to, nor to the dream, which some others maintain can be acquired, which should rather be described as ordered action on another plane than as a dream, both of which kinds of sleep-experience, if true, are entirely different from the world of dreams under discussion, with its chaotic happenings and disordered sequences.

dreaming, this exceeding consistency of our waking experience, as contrasted with the wild confusion of our dreams, is one of the most evident. And this brings us to the discussion of reality in the fifth meaning, where we defined it as that which, whether a mental impression or a so-called external object, has some element which gives it a fixity which no amount of mental effort (apart from action by which we can alter our circumstances) can annihilate, and which others, placing themselves in the same conditions, will also experience.

It is this order, this sequence upon which we can calculate, this fixity of things, which renders it impossible that an object of our experience can both be and not be at the same time, that two things can occupy exactly the same space, which equally makes it impossible to us to walk on air, to pass through a stone wall, to be in England this minute and in New England the next, which, marking off our world of dreams from our world of experiences, gives also what we call objectivity to our waking impressions.

Whence comes this fixity is a profound question, and involves us in philosophic

theories which can only be touched upon very lightly here, but it will be necessary to glance at some of them for a moment.

It is, as has just been said, on account of this fixity, of these limitations by which we find ourselves bound, such as the laws of Time and Space, and of invariable sequences,[1] that our experiences present themselves as objective and more or less constant, as contrasted with vague and subjective impressions, which may change and alter as the subject experiencing them may change and alter. And it is on the ground of this objectivity that we apply the idea of *reality* to that which we call the outer world.

Nor is this different if we accept the philosophic theories which, like Berkeley's, regard all experiences as mental, or like Kant's, find the fixity, or the laws by which we are bound, to be laws of the very constitution of the human mind itself. Whether this be so or not—and undoubtedly all that we *know* of the universe consists of our mental sensations and

[1] The senses can never cognise causality. All that they know by experience is invariable sequences, to which the mind attaches the conception of cause and effect. It is preferable, therefore, to use the phrase "invariable sequences."

mental conceptions—the point is that, whatever these laws may be, we cannot in this present phase of existence deliver ourselves from them, and are as much bound to take them into account, to bow to them, and regulate our conduct by them, as if they were really imposed upon us by some hard and fast material reality outside of us. These laws, however much they may be mental only—and this we believe quite as much as Mrs Eddy can do—make *objects* for us, tie up our impressions into certain relations and sequences, in fact so objectify them as to give us the idea that there is an outer world. We may be wrong in positing it as *outer*, but not wrong in positing it as a world of *objects*, which are independent of our will, and which we are powerless to change, except by appropriate actions for altering the circumstances.

Consequently, when Mrs Eddy asserts that our experiences are not real, on the ground that they are merely subjective mental impressions, which we can change at will according as we believe in them or not, she is entirely in the wrong, for, as long as there are *any* experiences which we are compelled to apprehend as in time and space, and related in sequences we

call causal, there is a world of objects or things, with a reality which we cannot think away, try as we will.

In the fifth meaning, then, the world is real, and Mrs Eddy can only deny it by denying, as we have seen, that there are these fixed limitations.

Now is there no connection between *this* reality and the Supreme Reality of the first two definitions? May we not expect to find that the lower reality is derived from, and included under, the higher? It is important to our understanding of the Universe that we should find it so, for if there are two kinds of Reality, which are entirely unrelated, if one does not include the other, or both are not included under a third, then we shall find two separate and alien worlds, and ourselves landed in the duality our souls abhor. Unity will have vanished, and all intelligible cognition of the Universe be gone.

On Mrs Eddy's own showing—we are careful to take her own premises in our arguments—we are made in the image of God, we reflect Him, share in His Mind, in His Being. Hence we must assume that our minds are God-derived, and that those activities, which

constitute the very nature of our minds, such as the ability to receive sensations, to sort them and discriminate between them, and such as the intellectual powers by which we reason upon them and reduce our impressions to order, are also created by God. If not, how do we come by such powers? We are well aware that Mrs Eddy says they are the creation, as false beliefs, of mortal mind, but this is to endow that part of our mind which she calls mortal with self-creation, for she will not allow mortal mind to be real, or to have any relation with the Supreme Reality. Hence mortal mind is self-created, and has also created itself with an indefinite power for producing innumerable false beliefs. Hence two creators in our Universe, and once more the great basal assumption on which Mrs Eddy lays as much stress as we do, that of Unity, is contradicted, and once more we have a duality which renders intelligible knowledge impossible, and defeats all efforts to know the Universe as a series of ordered relations.

No, in spite of Mrs Eddy, if we are to cling to the basal principle of Unity, which is a conception from which no class of sane thinker has ever been able to escape, we are bound to

assert that, unless we are to believe in two unrelated Creators, and two Independent Intelligences, our intellect and other mental activities are derived from God. It must therefore be assumed when they convey knowledge, that the knowledge, though relative indeed, has some element of reality in it, is not all illusion.

Consequently, when our minds interpret our impressions for us in what we may call terms of fixities, in ordered relations and sequences which we are powerless to alter, we are forced to assume that the objects thus presented to us have a certain reality. And further, that, as this reality is due to the action of our mental powers of apprehension — which we have shown must be God-derived — we are driven to believe that the reality, so apprehended, is a reality derived from Supreme Reality, and trustworthy *as far as it goes*, about which we shall have more to say when we are again discussing illusion.

We must go yet a little further into the discussion of these fixities, or laws.

From what we have said above, we may safely assume that our intelligence has something in common with the Supreme Intelli-

gence, and, indeed, if it had not, it would be something else, and not intelligence at all. Hence a high importance must be given to that element in our minds which so imperiously compels us to interpret the Universe in terms of law, and by which it objectifies its experiences, most especially if it is true that these laws are part and parcel of the very mechanism of the mind itself. And for this very probable theory we are by no means obliged to betake ourselves to so transcendental a thinker as Kant, for the man of physical science has arrived at a theory so closely allied, that he too sometimes talks of these laws by which we see things in fixed relations as the Laws of Thought. "The very fact that man *does* think," says one such scientist, "seems to me sufficient to show that there is a definite relation, a fixed order between one finite thing and another. This definite relation, this finite order, is what we term Law, and hence follows that axiom without which it is impossible for any knowledge, any thought, to exist, namely, 'The same set of causes always produces precisely the same effect.' What is the nature of this Law, this ordered outcome of cause and effect? Obviously it is not a finite changeable

thing, it is absolute, infinite, independent of all conceptions of time or change, or particular groups of finite things. Hence it is, the relation between finite and infinite."[1] "I should nowadays," adds Mr Pearson in a note, "place the necessity of causation *in the first place in the thinker*,[2] neither in phenomena nor in 'things in themselves.'"

Here we find the conception of Law stated by a physical scientist (that class of person who, according to Mrs Eddy, places all reality in the material senses) to be a *mental* thing, and the link between the finite and the infinite, which is tantamount to giving it a share in absolute reality; but the point of it is, that the thinker himself furnishes the conceptions of fixity, of Law which enable him to think at all. Philosophy and modern physical science, then, associate the reality of objectivity or fixity with the ultimate reality, thus tending, as they always must, to establish Unity.

Very far is Mrs Eddy from this. She denies, as we know, objectivity altogether, and will allow no reality in any sense to these

[1] Karl Pearson's "Ethic of Free Thought."

[2] The italics are ours.

fixed experiences. It is all a subjective illusion of mortal mind, and she does not attempt in any other manner to explain or account for them. The result is, she falls into the endless contradictions of which we have quoted so many instances.

No wonder, for Mrs Eddy is holding a brief for what is alien to the very power of thought itself, and therefore it is inevitable that she should contradict her own premises at every turn.

But we have yet a little more to say on the question as to whether the reality of objectivity, or fixity, can be included under the higher Reality, as a rivulet from the fountain-head. We must just allude—though only allude—to the extraordinarily interesting recent developments of philosophy, in which the mechanism of the human mind is held to be in such close correspondence with the rest of God's creation (as being both derived from a common creative source), that, in proportion as man brings his impressions under the ordered law which is of the very essence of his thought, he interprets the universe more and more nearly as what it is, in fact, recognises truly the facts of the universe so far as it can reveal

itself to his actual state of mental development. On this theory our knowledge is relative rather because our mind has only partially evolved on its path towards identifying itself with the infinite, and understanding its manifestations, than relative in the sense that in its very nature the mind of man is incapable of understanding the truth of things. But this doctrine of Philosophy, known as that of Absolute Identity, is utterly unknown to Mrs Eddy, the theory that subject and object, or self and not-self (outer world as we call it) are both manifestations of the Creative energy, and so closely related that the Laws of Thought correspond with the Laws of Nature. This deeply spiritual theory is impossible, if all reality is denied to matter.

Into the justification in reason of such philosophic ideas as this we cannot plunge here, but it will be interesting to note how nearly a very different mode of treatment, namely that of the modern man of physical science, arrives at, or approaches a very similar conclusion as to the identity of the laws of the human mind with those of the objective physical world.

We will quote again from Mr Karl Pearson

on this subject, remembering that he would not be with us in our theologic beliefs as to the nature of the Absolute, since as to that physical science has little to say, and very naturally the physical scientist is unwilling to commit himself about that which lies beyond the proof of his methods, or at least before his methods have led him up to it.

But this makes it all the more interesting to quote Mr Karl Pearson when he says of Law again:—

"It is that which binds together the individual and the universe, giving him a necessary place in its life. Law makes his 'becoming' a necessary part of the 'becoming' of the universe: neither could exist without the other." It is a truism, of course, that we are frequently able to forecast by means of calculation exactly what is going to happen in the heavens, or something that *must*, according to our reasoning from phenomena already known, be discovered, if only we can go through the processes necessary for the discovery. But let us see this truism as it is worked out by Mr Pearson. "So great is our confidence in the power of reason," he says, "that when it leads us to a result which

has not been confirmed or discovered by physical observation, we say: Look more carefully, get better instruments, and you will find it *must* be so. There are several instances of reason discovering before observation the existence of a new physical phenomenon . . . we work out on our paper the whole of their (heavenly bodies) most complex motions, and we find that the results agree completely with the physical phenomena. But why should they? Why should the intellectual, rational process on our paper coincide absolutely with the physical process outside?" Then he goes on to ask why one empirical law of the universe should not be logically—that is according to our mental laws—in contradiction to each other, and supposes our replying because Nature cannot contradict herself. "But," he continues, "when we say that Nature cannot contradict herself, we are really only asserting that experience teaches us that Nature never contradicts, not herself, but our logic. In other words, the laws of the physical universe are logically related to each other, flow rationally the one from the other. This is really the greatest result of human experience, the greatest

triumph of the human mind. *The laws of the physical universe follow the logical processes of the human mind.* This Identity of the physical and the rational processes is the greatest truth mankind has learnt from experience."[1] Here is something very nearly approaching to the recognition of the identification of the laws of Nature and the laws which constitute the mechanism of the human mind, namely, the mode of procedure of the mind in trying to understand the universe; and let us note, in passing, but we shall have more to say of this presently, how near an approach it is to the idealisation of so-called matter.

We have dwelt upon all this to point out that the fixity which gives objectivity to our experience, is, not only regarded by Philosophy, but is more and more recognised by Physical Science, as Law bound up in the constitution of the human mind itself. This is in agreement with Mrs Eddy's position that our world of experience is mentally conceived. But here our agreement ends, for, so far from thinking with her that it is *there-*

[1] "Ethics of Free Thought," Karl Pearson. (The italics are his.)

fore a subjective delusion and unreal, we believe on that very account that our world of experience *is real*, (in a relative sense) because the constitution of the mind, which compels us to apprehend it in certain sequences, must be a constitution bestowed by the Creator, and therefore cannot be the father of lies or of feeble, floating, hovering illusions of falsities which are nothings.

Let us repeat it once more in order to be clear how we regard the reality of our experiences. We have found that it is not subjective in the sense that it is within the control of the subject, to be created into something, or disbelieved into nothing, at the will of the individual. We have found that it is real in the sense that it has a fixity, a relative permanence due to an element that is something other than mere subjective fancy of the mind; and that this fixity, or power of the intellect by which we apprehend the Universe through the medium of laws, which reduce the chaotic variety presented by the senses to an ordered sequence of events, is a God-created power of mind, and that, consequently, such reality as is presented to us, is, though

relative, derived from the Supreme and Absolute Reality, has in fact a share in it.

SECTION 2.—*The Human Intellect and Natural Science.*

As in our discussion of Reality, we found the human intellect involved as well, it will be convenient to finish here what we have to say upon this subject and the closely allied one of Natural Science. Of the intellect we need not say more, as we think in the last section that it has been exonerated from Mrs Eddy's charge against it, that it reveals to us nothing but illusions, and is knowledge gained merely from the "material senses." Any further defence of it against such aspersions will come in the course of what we have to say of that great triumph of the human intellect, the knowledge that we have of Physical Science.

In this connection we must recall some of the passages quoted on this subject in the second chapter. We shall remember with

what contempt Mrs Eddy alluded to the fact that what she calls "mortal forms of thought," should be dignified with the name of *laws*, and how she stated that "human thought never projected the least portion of true science." We have quoted one or two instances to show how differently one of our prominent Physical Scientists regards the marvellous laws through which we apprehend the harmonious relations and order of the Universe. In the light of the wonders of the creation, as revealed to us by the intellect, of its exact working according to Law, of its unbroken sequences, of its unity in relations, of the widely differing facts, which are found nevertheless to group themselves in comparative simplicity into classes, of the correlation of forces—apparently almost foreign to each other in their nature—in the light of all this, and much besides, which we have not time to dwell upon, how pitiably read these statements in "Science and Health," and how deplorable a lack of any true understanding of Physical Science do they exhibit; and worse, how pitiable a blindness to the ordered and harmonious intelligence of God's creation.

Then how mistaken is the following

sentence already quoted: "Natural Science, as it is commonly called, is not really natural or 170.
scientific, because it is deduced from the evidence of the physical senses. Ideas, on the contrary, are born of Spirit." But we have found, when discussing the Unity, that the scientific man is powerfully dominated by an Idea that is very far from being "deduced from the evidence of the physical senses," namely, the conception already dwelt upon, that all experience in the last resort is referable to a Supreme Law, or Force, or Principle, which is not deduced from the senses.

And again, all the great hypotheses of Natural Science are ideas, ideas often conceived long before they are tested by the observations of the senses—not to speak of the fact that the great laws are never seen or handled in experience any more than is the underlying unifying principle. Of all people in the world, the man of Science is inspired by *ideas*, though "Science and Health" denies it. And this alone is enough to convict the author of mis-conceiving Natural Science, ignorant as she is of the fact that, in its more modern developments, it tends to confirm some of her most anti-materialistic statements.

If the rational powers of the intelligence of man, with their reduction of knowledge to law and order, are to be put aside as worthless mortal inventions, to what kind of disorderly chaos in the mind are we to turn for any truer apprehension of the Creator's Universe? Are we to believe that when we turn to the highest spiritual realities, we are going to find a universe of chaos and disorder, which at every turn gives the lie to all that we have learnt through our God-created intellect? Higher and deeper laws which may counteract these, we may indeed expect to find with the development or evolution of our spiritual faculties, which shall embrace and include those with which we are already conversant, but that these more evolved powers of apprehension should report all the rest a lie, is not to take an exalted view of the Being from whom we derive our being, and, as we must maintain, our Intelligence, and we find ourselves bound wholly to disagree with Mrs Eddy in her doctrine on this subject.

And, once admitting that Natural Science with its discovered laws, conveys to us, not illusions, but reality—as far as it takes us—

we are forced to ascribe some kind of reality to Matter, with which we deal in the next section.

Section 3.—*Matter.*

Having come to a conclusion about the Christian Science teaching concerning Reality, we are in a position better to discuss the validity of its treatment of Matter.

Mrs Eddy is, like all who think, very conscious of the apparent irreconcilability of Matter and Mind, and that for their description we use quite opposite terms. Matter, as ordinarily understood, appeals to the five senses, can be seen, heard, felt, appears as solid, impenetrable, ponderable, measurable, and always subject to the limitations of Time and Space. Mind is invisible, intangible, imponderable, non-spatial, and in no way to be handled as we can handle Matter, its effects alone being capable of being taken any accurate count of. They seem to be foreign to each other, and to form two separate worlds. The difficulty of reconciling them has led over and over again to the denial

of one of them, as the only way of getting rid of an awkward Duality, always so unsatisfying to the human mind.

Sometimes it is Mind, the existence of which is denied, sometimes it is Matter. Mrs Eddy takes the latter alternative.

When Mrs Eddy announces its nothingness on the ground that Mind only is real, she would seem to be understanding the nature of Matter in the old-fashioned manner, now only represented by the man in the street, but certainly not by the man of physical science. This crude way of regarding it is that of supposing it to be a hard impenetrable sort of stuff, the entrance of which into our consciousness or mind has indeed been a puzzle. How, as some one puts it, do tables and chairs and stones, etc., jump inside of our minds, if they are composed of the hard non-mental material, which Mrs Eddy rightly pronounces to be wholly alien from Mind, and which truly could not possibly have any relation whatever with mind. She is right in pronouncing *such* matter to be impossible, or at least, as being wholly outside the range of our consciousness and power to know anything about.

But it is a pity before writing on so important a subject that she did not acquaint herself a little more with it, and so really understand what she was writing about. What she is denying is a nonentity, the existence of which no thinker would ever dream of supposing, except the few who held the theory that our minds were like looking-glasses, which could reflect the tables and chairs and things made of matter in a perfectly passive and irresponsive manner. Even in this case the Matter we should be cognizant of would only be our *reflections*, not the matter itself, and so after all, as we knew it, be quite a mental affair, not a material one. But this notion of a passive reflection of a mysterious hard world, quite outside of us, is a long-ago exploded one, and the most materialistic psychologist maintains that our knowledge of the world is a process of many mental operations performed, as it were, upon our sensations, which again are *mental* sensations, an experience of the consciousness. What, therefore, Mrs Eddy means when she so constantly talks of "material senses," it is impossible to say, for our sensations are wholly an ex-

perience of the mind, no matter what their source.

For the sake of those who, not having time to study the subject for themselves, believe Mrs Eddy is giving them a really important metaphysical fact when she states that matter is nothing, and then proceeds to build up a system of Ethics and of Therapeutics upon it, we will go a little more at length into a discussion of it.

Our knowledge of the "outer world," as we call it, which is really entirely an experience *within our consciousness*, is the result of sensations received not by a passive mind, but by a mind endowed with a high activity. This activity is at once stimulated into a process of discrimination and sifting of the impressions it receives, the process varying, of course, with the amount of activity brought to bear, which depends on the quantity of vital energy present at the moment, and the interest of the stimulus. So far from the mind being a passive mirror, it only attains to any knowledge of its impressions by the use of its own native activity. Let us now mark that this "outer world" for us, consists of sensations, which are impressions of consciousness, sorted

and discriminated by the mental activity, and perceived as a world of objects in consequence of the laws of the mind itself, as mentioned in a previous section. From beginning to end then it is, as far as we know it, a thing of ideas, and does not consist of hard lumps of some kind of stuff, the existence of which within the consciousness is inconceivable. What then, from this point of view, is our world of Matter but after all a thing of Mind? On this ground, then, there is no occasion to announce that Matter is unreal as a deduction from the fact that *reality belongs to Mind alone.* The non-reality of Matter is by no means a necessary conclusion. But we will glance at the subject from another point of view.

Of all the mysteries of the universe, the nature of Matter is one of the most baffling. There is no subject on which the modern physicist is more modest in his statements. Of one thing only does he feel he can speak with some approach to certainty in regard to it, and that is, that it is not composed of the "lumps of stuff" of which we have spoken. It would be out of place, and highly presumptuous on our part, to attempt a dis-

cussion of the various theories which in one form or other throw out a hypothesis about Matter, so un-material in its conception, that there is no other term to apply to it than some term implying Mind. We would merely suggest the sort of turn physical science is taking in this direction. There is the idea thrown out by Leibnitz long ago, that on the definition of the ultimate atom as indivisible, we are reduced to the conception of it as a point, as that which has no dimensions, and this reduces it to idea at once. But there are more modern theories also which, instead of materialising the world, idealise it.

There is the theory of Boscovitch also regarding the atom as a mathematical point, these points being endowed with attractive and repulsive forces. There is Lord Kelvin's "vortex-atom theory," suggesting that Matter may be the motion of ether within ether, that is to say, the atom is conceived of as a ring of motion, if we may put it as crudely as this. This is certainly a non-material theory as to the nature of Matter. There is a theory even, that the atom is an empty void in the immaterial ether, endowed with a power of

motion, or it may be merely a geometrical question, shape making it different from non-matter, and so on. This is all we will presume to say on so recondite a subject, though other modern hypotheses treating Matter as equally ethereal are yet being put forward, and we only allude to such theories at all, in order to point out that the present physical hypotheses tend to reduce Matter to Mind, and so to land us in our desired conception of a Unity which includes so-called Matter, without our having to do violence to our constant experience by regarding it as altogether non-existent.

All these physical theories tending to reconcile the apparent opposites of Matter and Mind, are, indeed, in marked contrast with Mrs Eddy's repeated reiterations that there is no affinity between them. In the light of these wonderful glimpses of the relation between Mind and Matter, which, though as yet but little understood, indicate that Matter is an expression, a manifestation of Mind, and so happily reduce the apparent opposites to Unity without the sacrifice of either—in the light of such theories, tending as they do to endorse the exquisite old poetical

idea that the Universe is "the garment of God," an adumbration from Him, a veil through which glimpses of the Splendour may be seen—how pitiably read such oft-repeated
89. passages as these, "Spirit shares not its strength with matter," "Who dare to say, either that God is in matter, or that matter exists without God?" Who dare indeed? It is Mrs Eddy who dares to say it exists without God, for it is she who gives it an alien life all to itself, cut off from all share in Mind, or Law, or Spirit. It is she who endows with high creative powers on its own account this
571. poor "nothing claiming to be something," this "opposite of Spirit and therefore opposite of Good," this mortal mind with its beliefs and its reasonings, its material senses, "which neither exist in Science nor can be recognised by the Spiritual sense." It is she who, by denying that mind can manifest itself in matter, or matter's other phase, as she calls it, mortal mind, makes two creators, two causes, two alien worlds, two intelligences, in contradiction of her own First Principle. But enough, we will quote only one more passage on this subject, sufficiently indicative that her system is one of irreconcilable opposites, which, if

they cannot be reconciled, deprive man of the power of rational thought.

She is speaking of the Intelligence of Immortal Mind, and the "so-called intelligence" of Mortal Mind. These "opposite 178.
symbols," she says, "never unite in figure or fact." "The straight line finds no abiding place in the curve, and the curve finds no adjustment to the straight line. Matter has no place in Spirit, and spirit has no place in matter. Mind cannot pass into non-intelligence and matter. At no point can these opposites mingle or unite. Even though they seem to touch, one is still a curve, and the other remains a straight line."

Her very simile is unfortunate. We do not know exactly what she means when she talks about the curve and the straight line as finding no "abiding place in each other," no "adjustment," but they are quoted as an instance of alien, irreconcilable opposites, as things absolutely foreign to each other. We do not pretend to more knowledge of mathematics than the author of "Science and Health," but we seem to have heard that curves are the result of tangents, namely of straight lines acting in different directions,

the series of their points of intersection producing a curve; and we also have heard that the boundary of an ellipse is a curve or a straight line according to the distance of the foci, and of certain other peculiarities in the relation of the straight line and the curve, too technical to mention here, which bring them within the Unity of Thought, within one and the same world of Reason. This is typical of the book throughout; not a single statement is thought out, and never does the author, when talking glibly of Matter and Mind, of Soul and Body, or of any other apparent pair of opposites, look below the mere surface of the thing. She simply cuts the knot of the difficulty by denying existence to one member of the pair. And thus she gets rid of Matter.

SECTION 4.—*Idealism.*

Before we leave the subject of Matter we must say a few words more, for we would not be misunderstood. But this will come in best in the present Section, in which we criticise Mrs Eddy's Idealism.

When we speak of Matter as at bottom

Mind, or at least the something that is "non-material" of the Physical Scientist, we must make a clear distinction between this treatment of it, and that of Mrs Eddy. For the Christian Science treatment of Matter also in a fashion reduces it to Mind, reduces it to "belief," the belief of mortal Mind. But here we come to a very broad distinction. In the opinion of Mrs Eddy, the result of its being demonstrated to be a mental thing is, that it disappears altogether, it is subject to no laws, it follows no real order, and has no kind of validity. It is nothing but a mirage of a world which we mistake as real, and which we can cause to melt away into nothingness by simply altering the attitude of our mind in regard to it.

The Philosophic and Scientific methods of treating Matter as, at its base, a mental thing, strongly emphasize Matter as a reality; the very fact that it is derivative from Mind only enforces the reality of its existence. Berkeley no more denied the reality of Matter, though those who have not read his work think so, than does the most thoroughgoing Materialist, but he said it was of the nature of Mind. He denied its existence as

"hard lumps" (not by any means language he used in his graceful style — but this expresses it to the less trained intellect more intelligibly), as something altogether external to the world of spirit. The much misunderstood Berkeleian theory cannot be explained here, but we must maintain, though crudely, for lack of space, that all the objects of our experience were as real in his view as in ours; but the laws that constituted their nature, and related them and governed them, were laws derived from the Supreme Mind, from God Himself, and thus they were in very truth realities, not the phantasmagoric falsities erratically created by some God-alienated thing like "Mortal Mind."

On any true Idealistic theory, the world of objects — to which we give the name of Matter—is a very serious entity to be counted with, recognised, and, if possible, understood and explained so as to bring it into its proper place within the sphere of Unity—not at all to be thrown away as inconvenient to the theory.

If Matter is, when reduced to its basis, Mind, it is a phase of it brought about by the Supreme Intelligence, and, this phase

once evolved, it works on the lines of laws, so to speak, suitable to the phase; and when thus developed, it presents a creation apparently the "other" of Spirit, an "other" created by Being itself, placed over against itself, and manifesting qualities apparently the opposite of itself, in which phase we call it Matter; and, as a definite, limited manifestation or creation, of Supreme Being, it is finite as compared with the Eternity of that from which it is derived.

On this same theory, the human mind is another manifestation in creation of Supreme Intelligence, a phase more like Itself, "made in the image of God," less "other" to Spirit, less placed "over against itself," so to speak, more akin to itself, and thus a much higher manifestation than that of Matter. Thus subject and object, the human mind and its experiences, being derived from the One Supreme Unity, as already pointed out, the human mind can understand something of the world of objects or experience, for subject and object share in a common Life, are closely related as developments, creations of the Supreme One.

It is easily conceivable on such a theory as

this—put here most crudely, diagrammatically, as it were—that the Human Mind can under some circumstances utilise higher laws than those that govern Matter, and so neutralise the latter, counteract them, as, for instance, in the mental cures claimed by Christian Science. Mrs Eddy accounts for her cures by announcing that the physical laws of cause and effect do not exist, which is a very different thing from this other theory which allows of their being *counteracted*.

We have been able to give a mere outline of true Idealism, since so great a subject has occupied the attention of thinkers over thousands of years, and needs volumes for its exposition, but we hope we have just indicated enough to show how little the "Metaphysic" of "Science and Health" deserves the name of Idealism, how miserably thin it is, and how utterly it fails to explain the problems before us. Just glibly to deny the existence of Matter, and pronounce it "false belief," is a very cheap way of arriving at Idealism.

Yet, so inspiring is the doctrine of Idealism, that even the poor thin rendering of it in "Science and Health" has had a truly

inspiring influence, and accounts amongst other things for the deep impression the book has made upon certain minds. We only wish those attracted by this element in the teaching would make a serious study of the subject, and penetrate to the real depths which this book fails to reach, and so escape the absurdities of its "Metaphysic."

In connection with Idealism, we must say a word upon Illusion, as treated by "Science and Health," where it implies, as we know, the entire non-existence of Matter, and that all our experiences are Illusions, phantasmagoric, hovering, wavering experiences which by an effort of disbelief will be found to vanish into nothingness.

Many people are under the impression that in this doctrine of Illusion, Christian Science is only enforcing the great Oriental doctrine of *Maya*, and that it corresponds exactly thereto.

We wish to point out that this is not so, and although we felt exceedingly convinced of this, we should not have dared to make any comparison of the two without first consulting an Oriental expert. Having done so, we are confirmed in our previous opinion

that the Christian Science doctrine of Illusion is by no means that of Oriental teaching.

The two teachings agree thus far, and here we shall all find ourselves in accord, that *Absolute* Reality belongs to the Changeless One alone, and cannot be ascribed therefore to the changing world of phenomena. It is on this account that Christian Science pronounces the latter to be an illusion, and to have no reality whatever.

The Oriental does allow a relative reality to Phenomena. He does not pronounce physical objects to be nothing at all. According to him, Illusion comes in when we misread, as it were, these phenomena, when we draw false inferences from them, and thereby see them altogether in a false relation to the Absolute One.

Now we are given especially to false inference in two particular respects. One is when we fail to apprehend that our own existence is not a separate existence on its own account apart from the One, and so ascribe an absolute reality to our *separateness*; the other is when we equally fail to apprehend that the plurality of the physical universe is also at bottom, the One, inherent in the One,

and so fall into a habit of attaching absolute reality to the manifoldness of our experience. To regard either ourselves or the manifold world of objects as *separate* existences is illusion, is a false inference from appearances, is seeing the world and ourselves in a false relation, mistaking ourselves for separate distinct subjects, and the outer world as a separate thing outside of ourselves, and full of separate objects. Whereas, according to the Vedantic standpoint, we ourselves, and the world of phenomena *are* the supreme Reality, the One, and have no separate existence of our own. Christians would say, rather, that we are inherent in the Reality, the One, but do not very radically differ in their view of the subject.

Illusion, then, is in the Vedantic doctrine, ignorance which can be destroyed by making true inference instead of false, that is, by referring everything to the One for its reality, instead of attaching reality to phenomena *in themselves*, or to our own individual being *in itself*, as if they and we were all separate existences.

This is a very slight and crude statement of the Eastern teaching on the subjects, but

we hope this very crude rendering of it will be enough to show that the hasty throwing away of the whole world of phenomena as altogether non-existent, is not the doctrine of Illusion as taught in Oriental Philosophy.

For in this it is not that the world of phenomena vanishes, but that on a right understanding of it, it changes its character, and presents itself differently to us from what it does when we look at it ignorantly. And it naturally loses much of its importance when we cease to regard it as real in itself, instead of being real in the One. Had "Science and Health" taught the doctrine of Illusion in this sense, it would have enforced its excellent teaching that we should hold more lightly by Phenomena, without doing violence to our common sense.

SECTION 5.—*The Fundamental Principle.*

We have stated in a previous chapter that we are in entire accord with the Fundamental Principle of Christian Science, namely, that everything is reducible to One, that all things "live and move and have their being" in God; and we showed how, not only

Christians endorse this opinion, but that students of Philosophy and Natural Science also are dominated by the impulse to Unity, the belief that if we could only see far enough, we should find all things converging towards one point, all things subject to One Supreme Law, and derivable from Absolute Being.

But although we so heartily agree with Christian Science in this part of its teaching, we are by no means at one with it in its treatment of the subject.

Mrs Eddy attains Unity by throwing away the whole world of variety as unreal. This is a very shallow conception of Unity. Indeed it is not a Unity, because on such a theory there is nothing to unite.

It is scarcely more than an empty void. Instead of the marvellous conception of a Supreme Unity embracing within itself variety of the greatest possible and infinite richness, of the study of which we could never tire, and which ever reveals more and more of the depths of God's laws, we are presented with an idea of Unity from which all variety has been excluded. It is shorn of so much that can draw out our admiration,

our worship, and our love, that the human faculties are unable to grasp or perceive it in any vivid realisation, and we are left without any revelations either in a Human Personality, or in Nature, by which we can rise into something of an appreciation of the Supreme and the Divine.

In place of finding an Ideal which reconciles things to the senses irreconcilable; in place of finding a meeting-place for Matter and Mind, for Subject and Object, for Nature and Spirit, for Plurality and Oneness, for Humanity and God, we find an empty and distant *One* out of touch with the world, out of touch with the human intellect, out of touch with many of our highest aspirations and ideals. Thus we and our world are left in a forlorn isolation, bereft of the immanence of God, and able only to find the One by thinking away all this varied manifestation as foreign to Him, instead of ascending by means of them to some faint knowledge of Himself, and gaining through them hints of the wonder of His Being.

Nor is the poverty of the idea of Unity all that we object to in the Christian Science treatment of it. For an important *practical*

bearing is left out, which it would have been peculiarly appropriate to press, and that is the bearing of the conception of Unity and Variety on mental and physical sanity.

Now the mechanism by which the mind works is that of a rhythmic swing between two poles, and we best preserve sanity by a steady alternation between the clear perception of Variety or Contrast on the one hand, and the conception of the underlying Unity[1] on the other. In other words, we are wholesome and sane in proportion as we think steadily and soberly in accordance with the mental law, which is of the very constitution of the mind, namely, that we must bring our experiences in all their variety under the conception of Unity

[1] The phrase underlying Unity is not a happy one. To talk of the Changeless One as underlying Variety still leaves us too much with a conception of *separateness* between the One and its manifestations. We should rather speak of the Unity as being *revealed* in them. A sentence from Caird's book on Hegel in Blackwood's Philosophical Classics expresses what we mean. He says: "this inner nature does not merely *underlie* the fixed difference of external parts, but is *revealed* in them as a principle of organisation, continually distributing itself to them as members of one body, which can maintain their independence only as they make themselves subordinate to the common life."

—not throw them away as unreal and irrelevant, as does false Idealism.[1]

This fact is entirely ignored just where we might reasonably have expected to find it emphasized. Disordered, chaotic thinking, without reference to a leading Principle, is peculiarly adverse to stability of mind. It dissipates its energies, distracts it, tears it, so to speak, interferes with its rhythmic action, destroys peace, and thus acts injuriously on health in general, just as conduct pursued according to the sport of varying impulses, unregulated and uncontrolled by a dominating motive, dissipates the physical energies and tends to wreckage of the whole character. How truly here might the author have enforced her doctrine that health depends upon mental causes. This mental law, namely that the mind, like any other mechanism, preserves its well-being by working in harmony with the fundamental law of its constitution, is only too little known, and it is to be regretted that so

[1] We must refer any who wish to study this law further to Boole's Equation in his "Laws of Thought." A simple abstract of it has appeared by Mrs George Boole, simplifying the very profound treatment of Boole himself, entitled "Boole's Psychology as a Factor in Education." Colchester: Benham & Co.

important a deduction from the Principle, that all is referable to One, on which Mrs Eddy so justly lays stress, has not even been alluded to, and that such an opportunity has been lost, for it would have come in particularly well with the teaching of Christian Science in relation to Health. But not only is it important to bring our experience of variety under Unity, but it is equally important not to let the mind dwell upon Unity exclusively. To lose appreciation of variety, and throw one's experience of the manifold world wholly away, is equally dangerous to soundness of mind, and has helped much, it seems, to fill lunatic asylums. The due alternation between, and the due appreciation of the two sides in this great truth is the true movement for the human mind in accordance with its constitution. To lose sight of either Unity or Variety may impair the health both in mind and body. Rhythmic alternation is the law. "Science and Health" upholds the One, the return into Unity, but throws away the other, the realisation of variety, as included in the Unity.

The Many in One and the One in Many. The early Christians understood more of this than we do now, when, in their effort to under-

stand its application to Deity, they produced that most wonderful expression of this great Law in the Athanasian Creed. "Yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal," not three but one, yet there are the three.

For a philosophic light thrown upon the general doctrine of the Many as inherent in the One, that is to say, for what we may call an *explanatory conception*—for to talk of *explanation* of anything so far above our understanding is absurd—we owe more to Hegel than to any other Western thinker on the subject, and pity it is that Mrs Eddy, in her earnest desire to enforce the Unity, had never studied it from a philosophic point of view, before she enforced the doctrine that belief in Absolute Truth obliges us to discard as unreal all that is relative. Such philosophy, in the words of J. B. Baillie,[1] "holds in the case of Absolute Science, as also of every stage in the process of experience, *that its truth contains in itself the truth of the preceding form of experience.* The latter is not abolished *in toto* when we attain a higher stage. It is negated by *its own* more complete truth; what it ideally contains it implies. The very meaning of

[1] "The Origin and Significance of Hegel's Logic."

degrees of truth indicates that the lower exists *with* the higher: and if this were not so, the truths would be either of the same value, or altogether incomparable. The latter truth possesses *within itself* the preceding, and the highest, the absolute truth contains all the truth in the preceding forms of experience."

To take a concrete example, when we have found that the primrose, the cowslip, and other kindred flowers are all united in one genus, we do not, for that reason, assert that the individual species, the primrose and cowslip, do not exist, that they have lost their existence in the genus which unites them. In finding the higher genus, we do not lose its lower manifestations of individual variety. Nor do we any more find that on referring all to Supreme Being, all its manifestations in lesser being disappear. The higher *includes* the lower, instead of annihilating it, as Mrs Eddy seems to believe.

It is unnecessary to criticise in detail the Christian theory of the Body, Sin, Sickness and Death. For if the theory that Matter has no share in Reality be untrue, as we have tried to demonstrate, the consequences of that theory, namely the non-reality of the body, of sick-

ness, and death also disappear. And with these established once more as realities, owing their existence, with Matter, to the creative power of the Supreme Reality, the doctrine of the Mortal Mind as the creator of Illusions called the Material world, the Body and all its various characteristics, becomes an unnecessary hypothesis, and altogether superfluous. And with the disappearance of the Mortal Mind, that mysterious nothingness endowed with the power of creation, the one great claim to originality in Christian Science evaporates, and along with it the curious anomalies in logic, and the hopeless contradictions which have so dogged our steps as we have tried to understand Christian Science. It remains now only to enquire into the facts of Mental Healing, and see if they can be accounted for by some other theory than that of Mrs Eddy.

CHAPTER IV

MENTAL HEALING BY CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

We come at last to the discussion of the special point to which it is the object of Mrs Eddy's metaphysics to lead us, namely, the cure of health by a mental process without recourse to drugs or any other physical means.

That Christian Scientists and others have wrought such cures, we, at least, are not disposed to doubt.[1]

The time has gone by when facts of this sort can be lightly brushed away, as it were, by the laugh of scepticism. It is true that few instances of this kind of cure have been tested by such tests as are applied to any other order of facts, or such as are applied by the "Society for Psychical Research" to the phenomena of telepathy, of second sight, and

[1] That they, at least, produce temporary and partial cures is admitted by all medical men who have studied the subject.

so on. But it would, to our mind, be easier to believe in the possibility of cures by mental means, than to impugn the veracity of Dr Quimby, Mrs Eddy, and hosts of others in the face of what they tell us, and of the many instances on record.

We have little sympathy with this light-handed fashion of accusing whole groups of persons of either lacking good faith, or being themselves dupes. We quite agree that, since it is easy to be mistaken about the nature of a disease, it is necessary to accept their accounts of the cure of certain diseases with great caution. But to pronounce at once, as is often done, on hearing of the cure of something supposed to be incurable, that it cannot possibly have been a case of the disease supposed, is highly unscientific, in the ordinary use of the term. For such a statement presupposes perfectly ascertained knowledge as to the incurability of the complaint in question, and assumes as its major premise: "Such and such a complaint is absolutely incurable by any method known or unknown." We have no such certain knowledge about any malady; all that can be asserted is that it has never been so far authentically known to have

been cured. And although this rough-and-ready way of disposing of an alleged cure is often made by persons well trained in logical thought, there is no logical foundation for it whatever, though, certainly, often a strong presumption in its favour.

It is indeed greatly to be regretted that much more carefully attested instances have not been given to the world where organic and deep-seated maladies are in question, but an attitude of complete scepticism argues only ignorance and prejudice.

Mrs Eddy, unfortunately, does not give many instances of her cures in "Science and Health," and such as are given are, as to details and diagnosis, very unsatisfactory. Some eight or ten are mentioned, a few of which are described by herself, and the rest by her patients. Two are given as cases of consumption, but how far advanced it is impossible to say; another case is described as enteritis, whilst another is an instance of a foot crushed by a plank, the symptoms, however, reading like those of severe bruising, rather than crushing; then there is a case of hip-disease with carious bone, and another of internal ulceration.

These instances are far from convincing in

themselves. The lay description of illness we know to be, as a rule, extremely inaccurate, and in these cases the symptoms are described in the loosest fashion. The only one giving a detail at all conclusive as to the nature of the disease is that of the carious bone, where Mrs Eddy states that the doctor gave her ocular proof of the state of the bone. This would be a striking instance if it had been described with care, and the testimony of the doctor who said the case was mortal were forthcoming.

It is a pity that Mrs Eddy gives so few instances, and those so carelessly. Sceptics cannot be expected to believe with so little evidence.

A Christian Scientist girl, claiming friendship with Mrs Eddy, stated at a meeting not long ago that there had been a million cures produced by Christian Scientists, and that there was not a single known disease that had not been cured. Here is a rich field from which to take careful examples!

Seeing that the Christian Scientists are so anxious to convince, why do they not take a little pains about it? Such a statement as the above acts most adversely in the matter

of convincing people, unless absolutely supported by evidence, and only tends to invalidate anything moderate and accurate that they may say.

Many persons allege that Christian Scientists succeed only in healing neurotic cases, instances of illness—often acute and distressing—which are radically due to a want of nerve-force, and which are often set down as imaginary. Even were this all, it would be much. And let us avoid calling such instances "imaginary." The illness in such cases is often only too real, but it is the nervous organism that has collapsed, and this often causes apparent illness in other organs which are not in themselves diseased, but which fail in their work, because not supplied with enough nerve-force to do it. If by any means vitality can be restored to the nerves, the apparently sickly organ recovers its normal power. In such a case it is easy to pronounce that the illness has been imaginary, and to deny that any cure has been effected, when in fact a real cure has been brought about; but it has been wrought upon the organ that was really out of order, the nerves.

Nor is there any *à priori* ground for denying

the possibility of healing by a mental process. The Christian Scientists affirm that they appeal to the source of life for more life. To those who acknowledge that we derive our being from God, there is no great demand made upon the reason in asserting that, by drawing upon the source of our life, we can obtain more of it. This must be, we should suppose, the philosophy of prayer.

But, without going farther into this, let us appeal to already accepted facts in connection with the influence of mind upon the body. Some ideas will produce blushing, others cause us to turn pale, rage will bring on a bilious attack, terror will impart unusual muscular strength, change of scene, which means change of ideas, will affect the health for good, even when the change of outward conditions is markedly for the worse; so also will the stimulus of new and interesting ideas. A good account of such action of the mind upon the body will be seen in Dr Schofield's "The Unconscious Mind," and in other recent works on Psychology. The rate of the pulse, of the breathing, the secretions of the glands, and other vital functions of the body have, by recent experiments in the Laboratory, been

proved to change almost from moment to moment under the influence of passing thoughts. It is well known, too, how great is the action of hope or despair upon illness, also that constant attention to health uses up nerve-tissue. Indeed, it might almost be said that the injurious habit of dwelling in thought upon the discomfort of chronic illness increases the original stock of ill-health by a kind of compound interest. For the many who are apt to dwell on their symptoms —and all who suffer chronically have a tendency to do this—there is much excuse, for pain and discomfort are exceedingly aggressive, and force themselves upon the attention with most assertive insistence. This being so, one may well believe that systematic teaching of a mental method, by observing which, this waste of nerve-tissue could be prevented, would be one of the greatest blessings that could be bestowed on a generation suffering from the nervous excitement that results from the pace we now live at. Any sound method of the sort could only be welcomed.

There are other instances in which it is now acknowledged that mind can affect the body, so as to produce striking cures. It is

admitted by all who have studied the subject, that there are real and genuine cures at Lourdes. Scientific observations by competent doctors have brought these phenomena out of the region of mere superstition into that of ascertained fact, in regard, at least, to a percentage of cases. It has been customary until lately to regard all such attempts at cure as mere empty remnants of mediæval superstition, but however difficult to account for them, they are now facts that are reckoned with and acknowledged. Accordingly the cures attributed to the Saints of long ago have also a new significance.

There is, too, the old tradition of the cure of King's Evil by the touch of a king. This has also been relegated to the vague world of superstition, but has a new importance in the light of the rediscovery of the tremendous effect upon the body of mental conditions, such as faith in any special method of cure. As a matter of fact, in the reign of Louis XVI., an enquiry was set on foot to try to ascertain whether there were any such cures. Even so late as his reign, when faith in the King's touch was on the wane, it was found that there were a few genuine instances of

cure resulting from the touch. In England, in the reign of Charles II., similar cases were examined by physicians, who reported that there were some undoubted cases of cure.

Then there are such beliefs as that still extant in Scotland, that the touch of the seventh son of a seventh son has healing power. A physician was telling us only the other day that cures of this sort had undoubtedly taken place within his own cognizance, as well as cures by the incantations of a "wise woman."

There are also the well-known cures by Mesmerism or Magnetism, or by powerful suggestions impressed even without the need of actually hypnotising the patient. Again, there are undoubted cases of Faith Healing. Other such phenomena are to be met with in countries and tribes where the simple faith in medicine-men and magic has not been interfered with by modern ideas.

All these are instances of some kind of mental healing, of the powerful action of some idea upon the body, or at least of some energy more subtle than the physical ones with which we are so much better acquainted.

Now the question is, Is there some common

element underlying all these different instances of mental cure?

The *theory* regarding them is by no means always the same, however much in practice the same force may be at work. Mrs Eddy is most emphatic in denying that her method has anything whatever to do with Magnetism or Mesmerism. She includes Magnetism, as
283. so much else, under Mortal Mind, and speaks of it as "the specific terms for error, or Mortal Mind." "The hypnotizer," she says, "employs
284. one belief to destroy another. If he heals sickness, it is a case of the greater error overcoming the lesser. This greater error thereafter occupies the ground, leaving the case worse than before it was grasped by the stronger error." Her followers also strongly deny that they make any use of the power of will when trying to heal, and assert that, on the contrary, they do their utmost to suppress their own personality, in order that they may not impress their will, with its possible defects, upon the patient. They state that they call out the divine power of Spirit to work upon the disease. Their method of *thinking* whilst working the cure is certainly different from that of the

Mesmerist. It is still open to question whether the two methods may not draw upon the same healing force, whatever that in the last resort may be. No one knows what Magnetism is, and an absolute denial of its use is impossible, so long as its nature is not known. Mrs Eddy's statements that only Mind can cure, do not necessarily exclude Magnetism, since that might be an energy of Spirit, in a particular and, as yet, not understood manifestation. However, there is no doubt that Mrs Eddy's *theory* is in all good faith different from that of Mesmerism, and likewise her method of thought for drawing upon Spiritual force. It is still possible that it is, nevertheless, the same force that is called out, and that the two methods of cure are at any rate allied.

In theory, again, the Christian Science manner of healing is not to be confounded with what is called Faith-healing. In this case also, the energy called upon may be the same, but, in the case of the Faith-healers, they do not doubt the reality of the complaint, but believe that they draw upon a Spiritual and Divine force which can *neutralize* and *counteract* the evil at work in the

system. The Christian Scientists deny the existence of the disease altogether, and are not calling down the Divine influence to *counteract the evil* but to *dispel* the illusion. This is perhaps a nice distinction, but the Christian Scientists have a claim to be correctly represented, even if they only differ in their manner of accounting for results, and we have often heard these two methods spoken of as identically the same.

However much these different methods of mental cure may differ, they all agree in one point, which is, that in every case, the cure seems to be brought about by the power of some idea. It may be through faith in the idea, perhaps, that divine energy is enclosed within a sacred relic, or is associated with the touch of a king. Or it may be some new thought which induces hope, or some fresh realisation of God's promises of help. In the special method we are considering, the idea presented to the patient is that of the non-existence of evil, or he is assured that no part of his being can possibly be subject to pain or sickness. The question is: How can an idea produce the effect of bodily healing? No answer to this question, it must be noted,

will give the actual *cause* of the cures, for this in every case must be due in the last resort to the actual source of life—God. But it would be helpful to know, if possible, what is the psychological process by which a mental cure is wrought. What is it that actually happens?

Mrs Eddy teaches that nothing happens, except that an illusion is annihilated, or rather that a belief in a healthy body is substituted for the belief in an unhealthy one. Her psychological explanation is that on ceasing to believe in matter, matter disappears, and, with it, all the evil it is liable to. "Admit," she says, "the existence of matter, and we 367.
admit that mortality (and therefore disease) has a foundation in fact. Deny the existence of matter, and we destroy the belief in these conditions, and with it disappears the foundation of disease." "Once let the mental 368.
physician," she continues, "believe in the reality of matter, and he must admit also the reality of all its discordant conditions which prevent his destroying them."

This explanation will not satisfy those of us who believe that matter has a share in reality, and is therefore an existing thing.

It fails also to account for the mental cures in which quite other ideas than that of the non-existence of matter act on the patient's mind.

The best theory by which mental healing is explained—that is, as to what is the actual psychological process—is one put forward by Mr Thomson Jay Hudson in a book called "Psychic Phenomena." He has made a scientific study of the subject, based upon the now well-known phenomena of hypnotism, in which what is called "suggestion" plays so large a part. These phenomena have led many psychologists to the conclusion that there is within each individual a dual mind. This is where Mr Hudson finds his clue.

Like many others who have studied mental healing from a Natural Scientist's point of view, he holds the opinion that they are all due to suggestion. Dr Moll, of Berlin, in a pamphlet, recently translated into English,[1] takes the same view, but without enquiring into the psychology of suggestion, namely—*how* it works. Mr Hudson attempts to explain this, and he does so by means of the hypothesis already alluded to, and now

[1] "Christian Science, Medicine, and Occultism."

decidedly gaining ground with psychologists, that of the dual mind. This is the theory that, beyond the field of consciousness, which we are apt to consider constitutes the whole of our mind, lies, what Professor James[1] calls, an extra-marginal region, which, if it cannot be described as unconscious, at least must be termed sub-conscious. Many will recognise this as the "subliminal self" in the nomenclature of the late Mr Myers. Dr Carpenter points to something of the sort in inventing the phrase "unconscious cerrebration."

Dr Schofield calls it the "unconscious mind," whilst Mr Hudson prefers to speak of it as the "subjective mind."[2] In contradistinction he calls the mind, of which we are directly conscious, the "objective mind." In using any of these terms, it must be understood that they do not imply that there are two separate minds in one individual, but rather that there are two layers or two departments, or two phases of mind, to put it rather crudely. Accurate description of the duality

[1] Those who are interested in the "sub-conscious entity," will find it excellently treated in Professor James' recent work, entitled "The Varieties of Religious Experience."

[2] In the poetical language of Maeterlinck, it is "the buried temple."

in our present imperfect knowledge of it is difficult.

The objective mind it is, to use Mr Hudson's terms, of which we are conscious as acting upon this plane. It is capable of inductive reasoning and of forming judgments, but in deductive reasoning it is far less able than the subjective mind. Its memory is very imperfect, and it is not very amenable to suggestion, nor has it much power in controlling the bodily functions. The subjective mind is the reverse of all this. It lies so much in the background that normally we are not aware of it. It is difficult to reach, as it were, and, as a rule, only comes into manifestation under abnormal conditions, such as hypnotism. When reached, it is highly amenable to suggestion, but it seems to have no power of judgment, so that it receives a suggestion blindly, without enquiring into the truth or the untruth of it. It reasons from it deductively, often in the most brilliant manner, and if the suggestion involves action, will prompt the hypnotised subject to act perfectly consistently with the idea suggested. Instances of this are often exhibited by hypnotists in public, when the subjects ex-

perimented upon will personate various characters, according to the suggestion.

The memory of the subjective mind appears to be perfect, and it stores up all that is forgotten by the conscious or objective mind.

Owing to the fact that it has until lately usually been brought into obvious manifestation only by hypnotists for experiment, or else merely for the amusement of the public, it has appeared to produce only trivial and unimportant results. But it is now believed to be, in fact, the seat of our deeper life, to be that part of us which is in contact with the unseen, and which is capable of the inspirations of genius. It is also thought to be responsible for the extraordinary flashes of sudden insight to which some persons are liable. It would seem that it is capable of manifesting itself in some persons, and at some times, without the artificial means of hypnotism, making by its own activity what Professor James calls "an invasive incursion" from the trans-marginal region into the conscious mind. But for a fuller account of the subjective mind we must refer the reader to his book "The Varieties of Religious Experience," or to Hudson's "Psychic Phenomena," and other works

devoted to the subject. All that is relevant to our purpose here is its influence upon health.

The curious effects which can be produced by suggestion upon the bodily tissues and secretions of a hypnotised subject point to the conclusion that the control of bodily conditions is mainly in the power of the subjective mind. When the objective or conscious mind alone is in action—our normal condition at present—its control over the body would seem to be so slight, that it leaves it subject to the ordinary laws of cause and effect in the material plane, so that cold, heat, poisons, and other adverse circumstances will produce a variety of unhealthy effects. According to Mr Hudson, if the conscious mind can by any means, hypnotic or other, be thrown into abeyance, the subjective mind will be left free to act. The right suggestions being then made to it regarding health, it will set the organs of the body to work in the normal manner, and bring about within a short time a state of good health, counteracting the injurious effects of adverse circumstances on the material plane.

If this—as yet hardly established point—is

true, it throws great light upon mental healing of all sorts.

Mr Hudson considers that a complete state of hypnotism is by no means the only method by which the objective mind can be thrown into abeyance, and the subjective mind reached. He has experimented with natural sleep, and says that this is an excellent condition for enabling the subjective mind to receive suggestions. He also states that suggestion is much easier when the person who makes the suggestion is also partially hypnotised. For this allows the subjective mind of the operator to be in close *rapport* with that of the patient, and mere telepathy will convey the suggestion instead of using words. His account of the action of the Christian Science healer on his patient is particularly lucidly given, and he maintains that suggestion is the clue to it.

In the few instances of cure given in "Science and Health" it looks very like the influence of suggestion. In several cases Mrs Eddy is described as going to the bedside of the patient, and remaining silent for several minutes, at the end of which time the patient begins to rally. Here the suggestion would not be aural, but telepathic.

In other instances of Christian Science cure that one reads of, aural suggestion is resorted to—not recognised, be it understood, by the operator as being suggestion at all. The patient is addressed very emphatically by name, assured in equally emphatic terms that he is not ill, that the disease has no existence in fact, that God is Love, is all-powerful, and does not will that he should be ill; or other statements, of a similar kind, are impressed upon the mind of the patient. And in many instances within a few minutes, a few hours, a few days, as the case may be, a cure is effected. In cases of "absent treatment" the same powerful suggestions in similar terms are gone through very emphatically in thought by the healer, who enters upon the process after putting himself or herself into a state of concentrated meditation, which is, according to Mr Hudson, largely conducive to putting the healer's objective mind into abeyance, and the liberating of the subjective mind, which Mr Hudson would call a state of partial self-hypnotization. What it is *called* is a question of words. The Christian Science healer would entirely deny that he had in the least hypnotized himself; he would allow the state of

mental concentration, but not that it had anything to do with hypnotism.

In some persons the subjective mind will come into action under the stimulus of a powerful idea without the aid of hypnotism. This would seem to be the case where healing is brought about by faith in the touch of a king, or in anything else supposed to possess curative power.

If the theory here put forward be true, it accounts not only for the successes, but also for the many failures which occur in the use of all the different kinds of mental healing. The subjective mind is undoubtedly more difficult to reach or call into action with some persons than it is with others. Some are scarcely amenable to hypnotism. Some, too, cannot hypnotize. We remember the late Professor Sidgwick telling us that he could neither hypnotize nor be hypnotized, though he was most anxious to succeed. Many others would say the same. It seems as if the objective mind in such instances cannot be put into a state of abeyance at the will of any one, nor by the will of the subject himself, and thus the sub-conscious mind is never left to act alone. It may be that in some persons the two phases

of mind are much more synchronous in their action than in the case of others, or that the two phases are inextricably involved in each other, the objective mind never falling into abeyance enough to leave the subjective a free hand for acting on suggestions. Or it may be, as Professor James puts it, that the "conscious fields have a hard rind of a margin that resists incursions from beyond it."[1]

It is much in favour of Mr Hudson's contention—which is that of Dr Moll also—that suggestion lies at the root of Christian Science healing, that there are cases—and we ourselves know personally of one or two—where the mere reading of "Science and Health" has been accompanied immediately by marked improvement in health. This looks much as if the ideas contained in the book had acted as a powerful suggestion on the reader.

But for healing by means of suggestion, there is not the smallest necessity that the patient should accept the illogical "metaphysic" of Christian Science. Other operators of the sort, who are not Christian Scientists, suggest simply the idea of health, or that the subjective mind can counteract the ill effects of

[1] "Varieties of Religious Experience."

material circumstances; and there are endless available suggestions without the necessity of recourse to the absurdities about the non-reality of matter, or the non-existence of the body, put forward by Christian Scientists. They have doubtless greatly hindered the progress of this method of healing by coupling it with philosophic theories that most people cannot accept.

Since so many are not easily amenable to suggestion, it must be highly injudicious to apply the system of mental cure indiscriminately, especially if, as the Christian Scientists claim, it is necessary at the same time to throw aside all physical means of cure. To tell people to give up all drugs, to eat what they like, rise from their beds, and generally to throw aside all precautions, may be highly dangerous, and indeed has resulted in many disasters which have not redounded to the credit of Christian Science.

There are numerous other aspects of the subject which need consideration. It is by no means certain that recourse to the subjective mind is a safe thing for everybody. Some of the phenomena which seem to be connected with it are of a very dubious

character. Mr Hudson goes so far as to account for the state known as "double personality," for such phenomena as are called possession or obsession, and for the curious occurrences attributed to spiritualism, by this theory of the sub-conscious mind and suggestion. It is likely that he tries to explain more by his theory than it can in truth account for, and that, like so many other theories, its range will be found to be much more limited than at first is supposed, but, if indeed such strange and erratic, and often dangerous phenomena as those mentioned above *are* to be laid at the door of the subjective mind, it is obvious that it is not a thing to be played with. Such a method of healing, if it is to be universally resorted to, will probably need hedging with many precautions.

For we know very little of the subjective mind. It is scarcely yet established as a scientific fact in Psychology—though daily gaining ground—and as to whence it derives its power, or how, we are ignorant. What force or forces does it draw upon for reserved vitality? How far is it a passive agent in the hands of a higher agent? How far is its action

certain to be for good? Of all this we know little beyond the merest conjecture. The theory explains only a psychological *means* of action. It does not inform us what force is really at work. At most it indicates something of the way in which, or the channel through which, some unseen energy may work.

Nor does the theory commit us to anything making it necessary that Christian Scientists should repudiate it. For it does not in the least exclude the direct action of God, which Mrs Eddy claims to be the true source of her cures, and which the Saints of old claimed equally as the source of their healing power. It no more excludes the direct action of God, than healing by drugs excludes His action, for were not drugs created by Him, and do we not believe that the laws of cause and effect by which they act are also derived from Him? God, Life, Being, Creative Power, must be in every cure, whether wrought by the slower means of drugs, or by this more rapid method, or by the mere action of nature in the ordinary course of time.

The more we may believe in this psycho-

logical explanation, or any other explanation as yet unguessed, the more do we think with Mrs Eddy that the "Source of Life," the Supreme One, should be drawn upon in such cures by throwing open the soul in Prayer or religious meditation. We know not what possibility there may be that other agents of a hurtful character may have access also to the subjective mind, and we can but feel that Mrs Eddy's direct appeal to God as our Life, is most important as a safeguard in resorting to any of these mental methods.

Allowing full weight to the claim on the part of the Christian Scientists for some, at least, of their alleged cures, it by no means follows that a really new era in therapeutics has been entered upon. It remains yet to be seen whether the majority of persons are amenable to mental treatment, also whether there may not be many diseases over which it has no control.

The Christian Scientists boldly claim that they have cured diseases of quite another order than the merely neurotic. It is indeed conceivable—and we have heard some doctors admit it—that any system which could vitalize, recreate the nerves, might act favour-

ably in such definite disorders as, for instance, diseased tissues. For, fresh vitality introduced, might greatly aid nature in throwing off morbid developments, and the discovery of what a hitherto unknown agent like the Röntgen rays can do in this way, helps to make such cures the more credible. But until the Christian Scientists furnish better attested cases, and more accurate details regarding their alleged cures of organic disease, no person of cautious judgment will readily believe that such disease is amenable to the treatment.

Again, we have no knowledge as yet as to how many of the cases cured by Christian Science are lasting. Subsequent history is rarely given, although it is most important to know whether after two or three years the health of the patient is as a rule maintained. In the cases that have come under our own notice, there has generally been later on relapse into the old state of ill-health.

Until cases of cures are put before the world, giving expert diagnosis, the subsequent history, and enough instances to eliminate coincidence, the claims of Christian Scientists that they bring about real and permanent

cures, and especially that they can heal organic disease, can only be received by persons of balanced judgment with great reserve. And even though it should be happily proved in the long run that their claims are justified, it will yet remain to be shown that the system is one of wide application, owing to the fact mentioned above, that many persons do not seem to be susceptible to suggestion.[1]

[1] An excellent discussion of the influence of mind upon body in reference to health from a really scientific point of view is to be found in a recent work by Dr Schofield, entitled, "The Force of Mind, or the Mental Factor in Medicine," where the treatment of the subject is based on ordinary scientific grounds absolutely apart from Christian Science or any kindred theories.

CHAPTER V

THE TRUE AND THE FALSE—CONCLUSION

We have made an effort to disentangle the true from the false in the vague medley of "Metaphysics" put before us in "Science and Health."

The truth lies in the emphatic statement of the Unity, the Oneness of Being which underlies, or, as we prefer to put it, reveals itself in a Universe presenting itself to our consciousness as a manifold variety. The "Allness of God, Spirit," which is so continually enforced, is a doctrine which no Christian is likely to gainsay; and equally the doctrine that God is our Life, reiterated through the book, is one with which we are in the fullest agreement. There is, however, absolutely nothing new here; Christianity has always taught it, and the aim of every ascetic throughout the ages has been, however mistaken, perhaps, as to

methods, the effort to realise in practice the fact that the spiritual life is *the* life, and should dominate the physical, or at least make the latter play a very secondary part. Every school of Christianity has taught this. It is always useful to have this truth newly enforced, since in practice, and in our more careless surface thinking, we have a tendency to forget it, and to act on the assumption of two principles, a natural and a spiritual, instead of upon One which should embrace the whole.

This Unity, however, as already pointed out, although certainly stated with force, is very superficially treated in "Science and Health." It is gained at the expense of rejecting as unreal all that at first sight seems difficult to include within it; and this means rejecting our entire world of experience, including the body, and along with it all our intellectual powers and products of thought. In fact, it is not too much to say that our humanity is thrown away altogether, and we are allowed only a sort of vague spiritual existence empty of thought, and finding its reality in an empty void from which all manifestation in variety is excluded. It is a One which is not a Unity, not a Unification,

not a drawing together of many in one, not the whole which contains the parts, but a one which has no parts to contain within a whole. The positing of a Supreme One is true in Mrs Eddy's system, but the One that she posits is false, for it is not a Unity in which all inheres, the "all" is rejected as non-existent, and the idea of plurality being gone, the idea of One becomes meaningless.

Equally the Idealism amounts to nothing, for the "allness of Mind" is gained by rejecting all that which it is meant should be interpreted in terms of mind.

Again there is truth in the assertion that the sense-life is an illusion, but, in so far as we are taught to do away with this illusion, by throwing away the sense-world altogether, instead of being taught to interpret it aright, and to see it as a manifestation of, and in its true relations to, the One, the teaching as to illusion is false.

Naturally all the deductions from the First Principle when this First Principle has been deprived of its true significance, must be false deductions. Consequently the doctrine of the entire non-existence of Matter is not only a false deduction from the Basal

Principle, but directly contradicts it, by the positing of a whole world, even an ordered world obeying sequences with the rigidity of established law, which is wholly independent of the Basal Principle, and has no part or lot within it.

This false deduction is made the essential point on which the system of mental cure is based. Over and over again we are told that the believing in the existence of Matter lies at the root of "sin, sickness, and death." And Mrs Eddy considers that her cures are the "demonstration" of this doctrine.

827. "A simple statement," she says, "of Christian Science, if demonstrated by healing, contains the proof of all here said of it. If one of the statements of this book is true, every one must be true, for not one departs from its system and rule." We wish this were true, for we have never read any book which attempted to be a "scientifically" sound system, which is so full of glaring contradictions, and in which the conclusions were so absolutely disconnected from the premises.

"My discovery," says Mrs Eddy, "that erring,
3. mortal, misnamed *mind* produces all the organism and action of the mortal body, led

up to my demonstration of the proposition that Mind is All, and Matter is naught, as the leading factor in Mind-Science."

And this, she often repeats, is proved by her cases of cure with "mathematical certainty." Since there are many other methods by which cases of mental cure can be accounted for, which still allow of God, the One Principle, as their author directly or indirectly, the fact of the cures in no way demonstrates the absolute nothingness of matter, or of the "organism and action of the mortal body." Any suggestion that is sufficiently startling can bring about the mere psychology of the facts, and suggestions which did not so severely shock the common sense, would, with the majority of persons, work far better. To be equally firmly assured that God can work upon Matter, and bring it into proper action, should answer quite as well as the denial of its existence, and would be giving a suggestion not in direct opposition to reason and experience. As long as a single cure by means other than physical, such as the cures at Lourdes, can be adduced which has not been brought about by the assertion that there is no existence in Matter or in the

body, the healings of Christian Science do not prove that this "Metaphysic" is its real basis. Mrs Eddy's statement that "Mind
5. governs the body, not partially, but wholly," may be quite true, but its truth does not necessitate the deduction that therefore the body is a false belief. On the contrary, this very statement implies the reverse of the doctrine that the body is only a false belief, for if Mind "governs" body, it must be true that the body exists to be governed. To be consistent with her oft-repeated teaching, Mrs Eddy should write that "Mind *annihilates* the body, or the false belief in it."

How much more intelligible, how much more rational, how much more in accord with our reason and experience, would it have been, and how much more consistently could she have taught it, if Mrs Eddy had, in the words of a sympathetic American critic,[1] instead of putting forward the "theory of the unreality of the material world," taught us "to believe that mind is the substance of matter, that thought is the essence of things, that intelligence is the reality below all phenomena."

[1] "Christian Science," by R. Heber Newton, Rector of All Souls Church, New York.

This teaching, says the same critic, "is to free within a man a renovating power. To us slaves of sense, manacled with the fetters of materialism, it is a mighty emancipation to enter into the belief that we are free from the thraldom of sense; free from the mastery of matter, free from the tyranny of flesh; free men in the Spirit." Yes, indeed, but this has long been taught more forcibly by St Paul, and with this essential difference between his teaching and that of Christian Science, that, whereas both teach deliverance from the bondage of the flesh, and both appeal to Christ as the example of such life, St Paul also teaches how in Christ a dynamic force can be laid hold upon for the accomplishment of the same, whilst in this modern teaching we are left to our own feeble individual mental efforts in changing our belief for bringing about this tremendous change.

And this brings us to the point when it will be convenient for a moment to allude to the claim of this system to be called Christian. Wherever "Science and Health" alludes to any doctrine specifically Christian, the wording becomes more vague, and the meaning more difficult to gather than even

in the obscure expositions regarding Mortal Mind, human belief, and other metaphysical and psychological points.

It is impossible to say with any certainty what Mrs Eddy's teaching about Christ is. She undoubtedly accepts Him as the great Exemplar, and her system of Ethics is founded upon His teaching; she speaks of Him as of virgin birth, and says His great triumph was in His resurrection. But, as usual, her statements constantly contradict each other, and no connected sense can be gathered from them. Undoubtedly, on her theory that sin is a non-existent delusion, the Christian doctrine in reference to Christ and sin is wholly incompatible with the creed of Christian Science. But, since the incompatibility depends upon accepting the Christian Science "metaphysic," the "metaphysic" once shown to be false, Christianity remains intact, and it scarcely seems necessary to attach sufficient importance to the absurd contradictions of Christian Science doctrine, to handle it seriously from the Christian point of view. For those who reject its "metaphysic," however much they may believe in mental healing, Christianity remains un-

touched, while for those who do accept the bundle of contradictions of the "metaphysic," it would be useless to discuss the doctrines of Christianity. For to such as believe sin to be a delusion which can be destroyed by merely ceasing to believe in it, the saving power of Christ can have no meaning.

We will now briefly consider what it is that gives Christian Science its attraction for so many minds. One thing undoubtedly is the force with which it re-enunciates certain well-known truths, however absurdly it afterwards argues from them. One is the fact that God, Spirit is the basis of the universe. Another is the extreme stress it lays on the Supremacy of Mind. To many of us this fact has always been so manifest that it seems astonishing that a forcible announcement of it should come as a striking and very arresting novelty. It is so, however, and if we may judge from many conversations we have had with Christian Scientists, it would seem that this has not of late been nearly enough expressed by religious teachers, for the Christian Scientists always speak of it as if it were a new truth.

We do not believe with Mrs Eddy that

we can throw out of existence all that is painful in our body or disagreeable in our outward circumstances, by simply refusing to believe in them, but it is a matter of common experience that we can to a very marked extent modify the action of external conditions upon ourselves by refusing to attend to them. We all know that by focussing our attention on any object presented in consciousness, we see it with a distinctness which it does not possess for us when unattended to. We have but a limited amount of attention at any given moment, and focussed carefully upon one object in the field of consciousness, it has to be withdrawn from another, which will become vague and indistinct in proportion to the completeness of this withdrawal. We may even cease to be conscious of it at all, especially in moments of great excitement or absorption. Therefore what objects in the physical world we will allow ourselves to be affected by, becomes undoubtedly a matter of choice to those endowed with self-control, that is, within certain limits. For many objects are presented so intensely and persistently that we cannot by any effort of will ignore them. This is so with very

acute discomfort or pain, in the case of an insurmountable wall, and in the many instances in daily life in which we have to yield with the best grace we can to external events that we cannot alter. Even so we can still to some extent master the circumstances around us, and partly neutralize their power by wise adjustment of ourselves to them; and thus it is really true that, within limits, we can choose what objects shall affect us, and so have reality *for us*, and what things shall not. We can choose whether we will mainly attend to the happy or to the unhappy things in life.

Christian Scientists and other Mind-curers claim, however, that we can obtain much greater control than this, by recognising the immense power of Thought. There is probably truth in this, and we owe much to the Christian Scientists for laying so much stress on the power of Mind, and for emphasizing, as they do, that "Thoughts are things," and insisting on the radical importance of altering and managing our thoughts, as the root from which our actions flow. It seems curious that being, as we are, so familiar with the saying of Christ on this subject, that this truth being

forcibly brought forward by Christian Science, it strikes many as an almost new truth. We often owe much to any one who, by wording, or, so to speak, displaying a truth differently, enables us to apprehend it better, the meaning having lost its force by mere familiarity. The Christian Scientists have done this for many spiritual truths, and have really helped, in the words of Emerson, to "refresh the faded tints" for us, and this is no small thing to owe them.

We have heard many say that they have read the Bible with fresh illumination after hearing one of these old truths brought thus into new prominence.

But to return to the teaching on the supremacy of Mind. Mrs Eddy, as we have seen, carries this to absurdity when she maintains that our minds are the sole creators of the external world. There are, however, other schools of Mental Healers who reject this impossible teaching, but who, nevertheless, lay great stress on the power of thought over the body. How far they have successfully worked a more reasonable theory can hardly yet be decided, as it seems to be only in process of development. They endeavour to teach a systematic control of the Mind by which its

power over the body and its ailments may be greatly increased. They are, in the words of Professor James, aiming at making "what in our Protestant countries is an unprecedently great use of the sub-conscious life." It is possible that this may lead to great results; it may be a great coming movement, but, if so, it will need to be understood thoroughly and scientifically, and the practice of it based upon correct theory as far as this can be arrived at. For, to base it upon absurd doctrines about the non-existence of the body and so on, is to undo with one hand the good that is done with the other, since a persistent adherence to wrong-thinking is injurious to sanity of mind, and a great waste of energy. We have ourselves been witness to this waste in individuals who have strained painfully through years to disbelieve that they have a body or that they are living in a material world. This continual strain upon their energy in trying to believe the unbelievable becomes an unspeakable fatigue to themselves and to all around them. We have ourselves lived in continual contact through varying spaces of time with persons trying to do this. Life under such conditions becomes almost unlivable, after the first in-

toxicating glow which accompanies the first response to these impossible theories has passed off. It is high time that whatever truth there is in mental healing should be put upon a proper basis, and that the sub-conscious life should be appealed to by true and reasonable suggestions, instead of by absurd ones. It is not to be wondered at that a false "metaphysic" should have been developed to account for mind-cure, because the practice of it has been much in advance of the theory. The new Psychology which treats of the sub-conscious is in its infancy, but happily is already making rapid strides towards a development, it is to be hoped, of sound and scientific knowledge. Even when this may have been attained, it is, as said before, questionable how far it may bring about a method of therapeutics which shall be safe and generally applicable. It is, moreover, impossible to know at present whether this "unprecedented use of the sub-conscious life" is a healthy moral development for which we are now becoming ripe, or whether it is an abnormal one which may need by-and-by to be vigorously discouraged, as bringing about evils worse than

the physical diseases it is called upon to cure. What we need in regard to it at present is an open, but cautious, mind.

Meantime there are many little books written by believers in Mental Healing, which, without teaching any doubtful Metaphysics, give really helpful suggestions as to Mental self-management of a sort likely to re-act for good upon the body, and which cannot fail to be useful.

In so far as a Mental method of treating health may be likely to develop, it is much to be regretted that it has become associated with a new religious sect. There is, as we hope we have already indicated, no necessary connection whatever between the theory of Christian Science and its practice in healing. A new discovery in the constitution of Man by which his bodily health may be, at least in part, controlled, does not militate against Christianity as we ordinarily understand it. On the contrary, the deeper the knowledge that Psychology is able to reveal to us in regard to Man, the more does it interpret for us the profound knowledge of him possessed by Christ and by His immediate followers. Indeed, the more we are able to penetrate into the mystery of

Man's Mind, the more do we find how thoroughly Christianity has anticipated all that we discover, and how profoundly it is fitted to our deepest needs, without its being necessary for us to have recourse to fantastic and shallow systems of Metaphysics.

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